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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Fort Assiniboine, Alberta, 1823-1914:
Fur Trade Post to Settled District

by

© Richard Frances McCarty

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF Master of Arts

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
FALL, 1976

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled Fort Assiniboine, Alberta, 1823-1914: Fur Trade Post to Settled District

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of the history of the district of Fort Assiniboine, Alberta, 80 miles northwest of Edmonton on the Athabasca River, from the post's construction by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1823 to the agricultural settlement of the area during the years immediately prior to World War I. A trail was constructed between the post and Edmonton in the winter of 1824-25 by the Company. Fort Assiniboine, by virtue of this trail, was an important transport point for the Hudson's Bay Company on its transcontinental route from York Factory to the Pacific coast during Outfits 1824-1860. During Outfits 1861-1876 the post was a local transport point within the Company's Saskatchewan (later Edmonton) District. After the closure of the post in 1877 the area had a very isolated existence until the trail to Edmonton was revived during the Klondike gold rush as a part of an overland route from Edmonton to the Yukon gold-fields. Squatters began to take up land in the area in 1905 and settlement continued thereafter with the greatest influx of pioneers occurring during the years from 1911 to 1914. The trail to Edmonton served as an important route to the area for these incoming settlers. Presentation of the history of Fort Assiniboine in its transition from a fur trade post to an area with some degree of settlement has been the primary objective of the thesis. The secondary objective has been to uncover and examine any elements of

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continuity between the fur trade and settlement periods of this Alberta community. Elements of continuity did exist between the two periods in terms of Edmonton's role throughout as a service centre and depot for Fort Assiniboine and secondly in terms of the existence and use of the trail between the two places.

The conclusions contained in this thesis are largely based on the examination of two main primary sources. These are the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company in Ottawa (Public Archives of Canada microfilm copies to 1870) and in Winnipeg (Provincial Archives of Manitoba, originals to 1900). The second main primary source is the collection of Homestead Files for the settlement period (Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton). Numerous other primary and secondary materials, both published and unpublished were utilized, including personal interviews with residents of the district.

PREFACE

Several methods of usage in the text and footnotes of the thesis will be explained here. Many of the dates referred to are in terms of the Hudson's Bay Company "outfit", or fiscal year. This comprised the period from the summer of one year through the spring of the next; thus the spring of Outfit 1824 would have been the spring of 1825. The outfit ended on May 31 and the next one began on June 1 of each year. In terms of the footnotes, "Hudson's Bay Archives" refers to the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company at Winnipeg (originals) and Ottawa (microfilm copies to 1870). "Provincial Archives of Alberta" refers to that institution, located in Edmonton.

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I am indebted for great assistance in my work first to the Governor and Committee of The Hudson's Bay Company, who kindly and generously permitted me the use of its archives, so very necessary for any inquiry into the Company's past. My second debt of thanks is to the Government of the Province of Alberta, and specifically the Minister and Department of Culture, Youth, and Recreation thereof, which generously provided me with a large amount of financial assistance to study the Hudson's Bay Company Archives in Ottawa. My thanks go out especially to Messrs. Dean Clark and Doug Babcock of the Heritage Sites Service of this Department, who gave me much assistance and advice based on their own research into the history of Fort Assiniboine. Thanks also go to the citizens of the district of Fort Assiniboine, who were concerned enough about the history of their district to request that a history be written of it, and who gave me valuable advice and information. I would also like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. L.H. Thomas, for his most helpful advice and counsel, and to Dr. J.E. Foster for his help. Thanks are also due to the staff of the Provincial Archives of Alberta, to Mrs. L. Arnett for typing the manuscript and to Mrs. M.J. Pomerleau for duplicating it. The greatest debt of thanks I owe is to my immediate family, without whose help, indulgence, and encouragement this thesis could not have been completed.

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Chapter 1

Fort Assiniboine: Area and Origins

Fort Assiniboine was established in 1823 on the north bank of the Athabasca River very near to its junction with the Freeman River, 80 miles northwest of Edmonton. It began simply as a fur-trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company, but soon became, as the northern terminus of a horse portage from Edmonton, an important traverse point for brigades on the route to the Columbia and New Caledonia districts and the Lesser Slave Lake - Peace River area. It continued in this role, with certain modifications being made, for the remainder of its existence as a Hudson's Bay Company post. This chapter will make a survey of the area, the native population and the origins of the establishment.

The site of the old fort, at about 54° 18' N 114° 48' W[1] and marked by a Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada cairn, is in a large meadow a short distance above the bending river, which contains an island opposite the fort site. The modern village of Fort Assiniboine, contains a small number of buildings, with a hall on the site of the fort. The village and some farms are in the meadow. Although this meadow is now cleared of trees and brush, there is evidence to indicate that a part of it might possibly have been timbered in previous years. Alexander Ross, discussing his 1825 journey through the area in his book Fur-Hunters of the Far West, spoke of the fort as being almost hidden in thick woods.[2] Perhaps the tree

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cover on the meadow, if it existed, was removed during the settlement period after 1877. To the north, east, and west of the site and meadow rise low, wooded hills, which are also present to the south, across the river; the site is in fact on a low shelf in the valley of the Athabasca River.

The immediate area of the fort can be set in a wider context; it is on the approximate border of the parkland and boreal forest areas of northern Alberta. As the observer travels from Edmonton to Fort Assiniboine, he will notice the open areas dotted with thick clumps of poplar, willow, and spruce trees which characterize the parkland region giving way to a more continuously-timbered area of smaller spruce, tamarack, birch, and aspen containing areas of bog known as muskeg. This area is as a rule more rugged than the parkland region, and the hills rising north of the fort are the beginning of the Swan Hills, a thickly-timbered region containing many muskeg areas and petroleum deposits. The area of the fort is in the main watered by the Athabasca River, which begins on the eastern slopes of the Rockies and flows roughly northeast into Lake Athabasca. The boreal forest, on the border area of which the fort is situated, is a region of smaller trees (spruce, tamarack, birch, aspen) which, because of their size, are of less value for lumber than for pulpwood. The soil is gray wooded, acidic, and highly leached; it is, agriculturally speaking, marginally poor in many areas. It must

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be noted here that the Peace River country of Alberta, which is good farmland, is not part of the boreal forest area. The boreal forest also contains many swamps (muskeg). The climate consists of very severe winters with cool, short summers. This area contains a number of animal, bird, and fish species: beaver, muskrat, bear, mink, fox, coyote, wolf deer, moose, otter, marten; geese, ducks, and grouse; white-fish and pike.[3] As has been said already, Fort Assiniboine is on the border area of the parkland-boreal forest regions. Its temperatures are probably thus a little warmer than farther north in the boreal forest region, while probably somewhat colder than in the parkland region.

It is certain that bands of Crees and Assiniboines were among the Indians who lived in the vicinity of Fort Assiniboine after 1790. This is attested to by David Thompson's note in his Narrative that Stone Indians (Assiniboines) and Nahathaways (Crees) came to trade at his house on Lac La Biche during the winter of 1798-99,[4] and by an entry in the post journal for Fort Assiniboine in 1828 to the effect that these two tribes traded there and were present in the area.[5] In addition, A.S. Morton comments that the fort was named for a band of "'Strong-Wood' Assiniboins" who established their hunting area in this region.[6] A.J. Ray also sheds light on the location of these tribes, and of some métis, in regard to Fort Assiniboine. Through analysis of statements made by Alexander Henry the younger in 1808, he makes the following

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outline in map and written text: 30 lodges of Swampy Ground Assiniboines on the Pembina River, very close to its junction with the Athabasca; 60 tents of Strong Wood Assiniboines in the vicinity of McLeod's Branch, and 30 tents of Assiniboines, Crees, and métis in the forests near Edmonton House.[7]

It is also possible that other tribes, namely Chipewyans, Beavers, and Saulteaux might have been in the area of the fort and possibly have come there to trade. These tribes were enumerated in the rolls, along with the Crees, Slaves, Yellow-knives, and Dogribs, of Treaty Number 8. This particular treaty was made in 1899 with Indians in the area comprising nearly all of northern Alberta, large parts of northeastern British Columbia, and the North-West Territories southeast of Great Slave Lake.[8] Although not evidence as certain as that cited vis-à-vis the Crees and Assiniboines, I think these treaty rolls indicate that Chipewyan and Beaver Indians may have visited the fort and/or its vicinity, the site of the fort being on the southern boundary (the Athabasca River) of Treaty Number 8. The Chipewyans were situated mainly in the area of the Churchill and Great Slave Rivers and Lake Athabasca,[9] while the Beavers' country was on the north bank of the Peace River, whence they had been driven during the eighteenth century from the Athabasca River by the Crees.[10] This was in fact part of a push northward and westward at the beginning of the eighteenth century by the

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Crees, newly armed with guns, which saw the Slaves (Beaver Indians) driven from the Athabasca River, Lesser Slave Lake, and south of the Peace River, to Great Slave Lake, and the Chipewyans driven north of the Churchill River. A general movement of tribes occurred, pushed north and west as part of a chain reaction emanating from the initial surge of the Crees, who eventually took the wooded country north of the Saskatchewan River.[11] It will be noted that some problems arise in determining the identity of the Indians around Fort Assiniboine from the fact that the term "Slaves" is sometimes used on its own and sometimes as a synonym for "Beavers"; A.S. Morton, for example, does this.[12] It is also possible that some Saulteaux were in the area of the post. A visit by a member of this tribe was recorded in the post journal of 1828-29.[13] Their original home, from which some of them had drifted west as far as the Saskatchewan River valley and the Lesser Slave Lake area, was the forest area between Lake Superior and Lake Winnipeg.[14] I think it can be concluded that the native population of the area in question here consisted definitely of Crees and Assiniboines, possibly Beaver, Chipewyan, and Saulteaux Indians, and perhaps some métis. What were the characteristics of these people?

The Crees, a tribe of the Algonkin linguistic family,[15] called themselves Kenistenoag, or Nahathaway. There were two groups, the Woods Crees and the Plains Crees.

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They were much more warlike than the Chipewyans, and used the canoe and travelled mostly by water, again a difference from the Chipewyans. In terms of personal characteristics, they were mild, affable, hospitable, and scrupulously honest,[16] and made their living by trapping, at which they were excellent.[17] Sir Alexander Mackenzie described them as being well-proportioned, of moderate stature, and very active. They lived in teepees and wore leggings, loincloth, shirt, sometimes a cap or vest, and mocassins. The women had their own particular shirts, which were knee-length in opposition to the shorter ones worn by the men, and had sleeves covering the arms. Before the coming of European trade goods, their needs were filled through the use of animal materials, such as awls made from moose bones. Their original country was in Manitoba and Saskatchewan between the Saskatchewan and Red Rivers, but they eventually occupied territory from Hudson Bay to the area north of the Saskatchewan River in Alberta and almost to Lake Athabasca.[18] The Crees north of the Saskatchewan River, with whom we are concerned, practised a migratory system described by Ray as the "Parkland-Forest Exploitation Cycle." During the winter, they lived in the forest in small, isolated families, and then moved back into the parkland in the spring into large camps. In the winter they trapped fur and then moved south to live on buffalo for the spring and summer. This cycle was also true for the Assiniboines of the same area.[19]

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The Assiniboines, also known as Stones or Stoney Indians, belonged linguistically to the group known as Siouans. They were originally in the Lake Superior-Hudson's Bay area and gradually moved north and west and joined the Crees. They were dispersed at various points along the Saskatchewan River well up to its head-waters by 1775, according to Henry. They were different from the Crees in being at first a plains rather than a woods people; possibly they did not use canoes. Their dress was similar to that of the Plains Crees, and buffalo-hunting and trade in pemmican with the whites were important occupations for them. Polygamy was common.[20] Already one can see the emergence of one interesting facet of the native population of the area concerned: linguistic, and possibly cultural, diversity. The Crees and Saulteaux were Algonkins; the Assiniboines were Siouans; the Chipewyans and Beavers, who possibly were in this area, were Athapaskans.

The Chipewyans and Beavers were members of the Dene (northern) group of Athapaskan-speakers. It has already been stated that the Chipewyans were less warlike than the Crees and did not use the canoe. They wore the pointed deerskin parkas from which their name was derived by the Crees, and subsequently by the whites. They have been described as innocent and natural in their manners and lives, just, sensible, and original.[21] These Indians were probably trappers who lived on the game found in their

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country, such as beaver, moose, deer, fish, etc. Presumably the Beaver Indians resembled them in these characteristics.

The Saulteaux were an Algonkin-speaking tribe of the forest. Also known as Ojibway or Chippewas, they were trappers and were valued by the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company in that capacity. They were encouraged to come west to the Lesser Slave Lake and Saskatchewan River valley areas by the two trading concerns for this reason.[22]

The last segment of the native population of the area to be considered is the métis. Groups of them lived in the forests near Edmonton House, and particularly in the area between Jasper House and Lac La Biche, where they were known, in company with old French-Canadian fur traders as "freemen." These freemen frequented the fort for trading purposes,[23] and thus some métis were probably native to the area of Fort Assiniboine. These people probably practised the same parkland-forest exploitation cycle as the Crees and Assiniboines of the same area, trapping during the winter and hunting buffalo and trading pemmican during the remaining parts of the year. Their ethnic identity can be guessed at; probably they were of English or French-Canadian blood mixed with Cree or Assiniboine.

Of course Indians had probably always lived in the area of Fort Assiniboine. Whether or not the exact site

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of the post was used by them cannot be determined in this thesis with its unavoidable lack of archaeological inquiry.

At this point we pass to an account of the activities of white men in the area in the years preceding the fort's construction in 1823. Beginning with Peter Pond, who established a profitable post forty miles from Lake Athabasca in 1778,[24] fur traders expanded into the rich fur-bearing Athabasca region and established many posts, such as the first Fort Chipewyan, constructed in 1788 by Roderick MacKenzie of the North West Company on the south shore of Lake Athabasca about eight miles from the mouth of the Athabasca River.[25] There was in fact great rivalry in this region between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company, and in some cases violence occurred, as in the seizure and plundering in 1817 of the Hudson's Bay Company post of Fort Wedderburn on Lake Athabasca by the opposing concern.[26] Several fur posts were established in the more southerly areas of the Athabasca country in the neighbourhood of Fort Assiniboine, such as Jasper House in 1813[27] and at Lesser Slave Lake about 1802.[28] Explorers also passed through the Athabasca country; Sir Alexander Mackenzie departed from Fort Chipewyan in 1789 on his voyage to the Arctic Ocean.[29] David Thompson travelled through the country around Fort Assiniboine several times during the period 1799-1812. In 1799 he travelled overland between Edmonton and the Pembina River and then by water to Lesser Slave Lake, on surveying trips; he then went east to Grand Portage by way of the Athabasca River and Methye Portage. In 1802 Thompson travelled from Fort William to Lesser Slave Lake, and in 1804 spent some time at Lesser Slave Lake. In 1811 Thompson traversed the Athabasca Pass through the Rocky Mountains; he travelled to Canada in 1812 by this pass and the Athabasca River.[30] After Thompson's traverse of this pass and the Athabasca River it was used by the Nor' Westers to cross the Rocky Mountains to Fort William. The Columbia express also travelled this route after 1821, as in the case of Peter Skene Ogden, to be discussed shortly.[31] Thus there were definitely white men, of both the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company, active in the Athabasca region and in the specific area of Fort Assiniboine prior to 1823. However, there is no sound evidence to indicate that the fort site was occupied by a post prior to 1823, when Fort Assiniboine itself was constructed. W.G.P. Allen, a local historian, argues that the site was occupied by a post prior to 1823 in his unpublished manuscript The Trail Through the Pembina Valley 1790-1912. Allen's ideas will be examined briefly here, as his work is one of the few dealing directly with Fort Assiniboine.

Allen states that a post, called "pemmican post", was built by Peter Pond in 1781 on an island in the Athabasca River, at the exact spot where migrant and Indian trails crossed the river. He states as well that this place was

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also referred to as Hunter's Lodge,[32] and goes on to use the terms "Hunter's Lodge" and "Fort Assiniboine" interchangeably.[33] This analogy is both self-contradictory and unfounded. The fort site is not on an island, but on the north bank of the river, as already stated. Thus Allen contradicts himself when he links "pemmican post" with Fort Assiniboine. His argument is also seriously weakened by the only reference available to "Hunter's Lodge." Gabriel Franchère was an Astorian who returned to Canada in 1814 by way of Athabasca Pass and the Athabasca River. Franchère describes in his journal how he found a post three to four days downstream from Rocky Mountain Fort (later Jasper House), where canoes were kept for passing travellers.[34] Franchère provides no further specifications as to the post's location, and Dr. W. Kaye Lamb refers to the post in a footnote as "unidentified."[35] Although such a post may have existed in the area of Fort Assiniboine, there is no sound evidence that it occupied the same site as the latter fort. Thus it is clear that Mr. Allen's arguments in regard to the fort site's history prior to 1823 are unproven and self-contradictory. Their reliability is in any case seriously limited by the author's failure to substantiate his arguments with references or bibliography. There is no sound evidence of European activity at the site of the post prior to the construction of Fort Assiniboine in 1823. What, then, were the circumstances surrounding the fort's origins?

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Fort Assiniboine, the second post in Western Canada to bear the name,[36] was established as part of a program in the Northern Department of Rupert's Land to revive posts or districts which were exhausted or close to becoming so by building or reopening other posts, to attract customers from the overloaded ones. The post at Lesser Slave Lake was to be abandoned in favor of a new post located on the Athabasca River at its junction with the McLeod River; this new post eventually became Fort Assiniboine, at its present location.[37] The minutes of the Council of the Northern Department of Rupert's Land for July 1823 record the following resolution:

> 64. That the present Post of Lesser Slave Lake if practicable be abandoned and that a Post at McLeods Branch be substituted in place thereof.[38]

It is interesting at this point to explore some of the circumstances behind this decision. The evidence indicates that George Simpson played a decisive part in the proceedings here, which of course is not overly surprising, given his position as Governor-in-Chief of the Northern Department. On February 14, 1823, Simpson arrived at the post of Lesser Slave Lake, on an inspection tour to Athabasca, Great Slave Lake, Peace River, Lesser Slave Lake, and the Saskatchewan River District. He conferred with the officer in charge, Chief Trader William Connolly, and agreed with him that Henry's House should be reopened the following year, in order to draw off some of the Indians and free

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traders frequenting Lesser Slave Lake, which was in danger of exhaustion.[39] By May 1823, Simpson had decided on the post at McLeod's Branch as well as giving consideration to one farther west, such as Henry's House. This is documented in his correspondence with William Connolly, which also reveals some dissent in Council regarding the Governor's ideas. Simpson wrote to Connolly on May 8, 1823:

> I have given much attention to the affairs of McLeod's branch and Jasper's House (say Smoky River) and it is my opinion that they should both be established from Lesser Slave Lake; Mr. (Colin) Robertson however is of a different way of thinking, ... he wishes them to be attached to the Saskatchewan Department, and means to lay his claims before the council, but if we confine ourselves to matters of expediency I do not think he is likely to carry his point... I have conversed with several Indians in regard to the State of the Pambina and Athabasca Rivers, and they seem to think that there is abundance of Water at all Seasons for Boats; the Pambina Portage is about 50 miles across, and Horses loaded with two pieces each can perform the trip in four Days in the Autumn & six Days in Spring.[40]

Eighteen days later, on May 26, 1823, it was recorded in the Lesser Slave Lake district journal that Simpson had given instructions that a post be established on the Athabasca River above McLeod's Branch, and that the Strongwood Crees and Assiniboines were to be attached to it.[41] It must have been at some time after July 1823 that the decision was made as to the actual site of the fort, for it was open, under the name of "Athabaska River House", during the summer of 1823. Ranald McDonald was in charge.[42] Further insight into Simpson's decisions and the attitude of the Council toward them is given in a second letter from him to Connolly, dated January 10, 1824:

> All the opposition that was made in Council to the Establishment of McLeod's Branch did not alter the opinion I formed on that subject while on the spot . . . I therefore confidently expect that in the event of your having arrived too late last fall to effect those changes, the necessary steps will be taken this spring conformable to the Minutes of Council.[43]

It is lamentable that the above words of Simpson's do not give more information on the nature of the councillors' arguments in regard to the establishment of the post or the reasons for its present location. The question of why Fort Assiniboine was located on its present site and neither at McLeod's Branch, as per Council's resolution, nor above the same, as per Simpson's instructions, must remain, at least for the moment, unanswered. It is clear, nevertheless, that George Simpson had a decisive influence on its establishment.

As mentioned above, the fort was opened during the summer of 1823, under the charge of Ranald McDonald. It is referred to as "Athabasca (or Athabaska) River House" in the Edmonton House journal entries which contain the above information, although John Work referred to it using its proper name. He passed through on his way to the Columbia in the autumn of 1823, while construction was

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still in progress and mentioned McDonald:

> About noon arrived at a new house which Mr. McDonald, the gentleman who is superintending the building, calls Fort Assiniboyne. It is situated on the north bank. This is the house that was to have been built at McLeod Branch.[44]

Unfortunately this description contains no definite information about the fort's construction; "house" did not necessarily mean a single dwelling but was applied to a post in general, as in the name "Edmonton House." Thus it is impossible to tell from Work's comments whether the fort at this time consisted merely of one building or of several. Construction must have begun in the summer when the fort was opened and continued into the fall; there were probably several buildings. One probably housed the trading store and quarters for the gentleman in charge, with one or two buildings housing the servants and their families. There was probably a fur press as well.

The staff at Fort Assiniboine was small during this first year of operation (1823-24). The manager was Ranald McDonald, who filled this position during the summer of 1823 and during the winter as well. McDonald arrived at Edmonton House on October 4, 1823 and departed the next day for his post. The writer of the journal noted that the post's outfit had not yet arrived; McDonald was probably in search of supplies. He returned to Edmonton on October 11 of the same year to get supplies, as his outfit had still not arrived from Lesser Slave Lake. He

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departed three days later. On both of these trips he had a boy with him, referred to as "Parissien's son." This boy was the son of a servant named Jean-Baptiste Parissien or Parisien who was hired at Fort Assiniboine in 1823 and who will be discussed in the following chapter.[45] McDonald does not appear to have been a distinguished man of the Company's service. He served in the Saskatchewan District during the period 1822-23, when he was described in the Company's records as steady, but inactive, sickly, deficient in learning, and not a good clerk or trader. He served in the Lesser Slave Lake District in 1824 and returned to Canada in that year.[46] In his assignment to Fort Assiniboine, McDonald replaced Chief Trader Joseph Felix La Rocque, who was appointed to the McLeod's Branch establishment by the Council of the Northern Department in July 1823; the same resolution provided a clerk and two men to constitute the summer staff.[47] It is likely, therefore, that the fort was open during the summer of 1824. La Rocque served in the Saskatchewan District during 1823.[48]

During the first year of its existence, the fort was attached to the Lesser Slave Lake post, and through its attraction of the Assiniboines from the Saskatchewan River increased the parent post's profits.[49] The outfit for the post was to come through Lesser Slave Lake, and was included in the total outfit for the Lesser Slave Lake District. This was to comprise 96 pieces in four canoes, navigated by 21 men.[50] There is no mention of the post's

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returns coming to Edmonton in the spring; they were undoubtedly taken to York Factory as part of the Lesser Slave Lake District returns.

Fort Assiniboine was constructed as a post for the Woods Crees and Assiniboines, and the Hudson's Bay Company took pains to ensure that these tribes availed themselves of the new facility. During the month of October 1823 men from Edmonton talked to the Indians and attempted to persuade them to go to the new post. The Edmonton post journal contains an entry of October 6 stating that Patrick Small and George Ward intended to go to the Strong Wood Assiniboines and persuade them to go to Athabasca River, the post intended for them as well as the Crees. The Indians seem to have been unenthusiastic at first about the new establishment; the above entry also contained the writer's opinion that neither tribe would like the new policy. Two days earlier, the journal mentions, the Strong Wood Assiniboines had gone to the "old white mud house" (Old White Mud Fort, west of Edmonton) but not to the Athabasca River House; they wanted their supplies from Edmonton. An entry on October 8 recorded that Small obtained a favorable response from three Stone (Assiniboine) Indians; the writer of the journal, however, was uncertain of the soundness of their promises to go to Athabasca River House and pass the winter there. The Company's firm resolve was portrayed in Small's telling them that all other doors would be closed to them. The Indians, nevertheless, clearly did not want to go to Fort Assiniboine; on October 10 two Thickwood Assiniboines came to Edmonton and declared their reluctance to go to the new post. Rowand persuaded them to go, giving them some tobacco and ammunition.[51] The Company obviously was endeavouring to get the new establishment off to a good start.

Travellers on their way to the Columbia also passed through Fort Assiniboine during 1823; Peter Skene Ogden was taking the express through and left his family at the post. He was accompanied by John Work.[52]

Thus progressed the first year of the new post's existence. There was probably some trading through the winter even if the Indians were not very enthusiastic at first about the fort; they would be supplied with goods in the fall and would bring their furs in, until at last spring came and the returns were sent out to York Factory. As already mentioned, the fort was probably open during the summer of 1824.

Fort Assiniboine's second year in existence was an important one, for during this time the post was designated an important traverse point on a transcontinental trade route. The route actually began to be used in 1825. This second period in Fort Assiniboine's history forms the subject for discussion in the next chapter.

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Footnotes

[1] Chalmers, Eccles, Fullard, ed., Philips' Historical Atlas of Canada (London, 1966), Index, p. vi.

[2] Lawrence J. Burpee, On the Old Athabaska Trail (Toronto, 1926), p. 124.

[3] Atlas of Canada (Ottawa, 1957), plates 30, 35, 39, 42-44. Also A.N. Strahler, Introduction to Physical Geography, 2nd edition (Toronto, 1970), p. 174.

[4] J.B. Tyrrell, ed. David Thompson's Narrative of His Explorations in Western America 1784-1812 (Toronto, The Champlain Society, 1916), pp. 304-305.

[5] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1828-29. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[6] A.S. Morton, A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71. 2nd Ed., edited by L.G. Thomas. (Toronto, 1973), p. 701.

[7] A.J. Ray, Indians In the Fur Trade (Toronto, 1974), pp. 95-98.

[8] Geographic Board of Canada, Handbook of Indians of Canada (Ottawa, 1913. Reprint ed., Toronto, 1971), p. 478. See also map of treaty areas at the back of this work.

[9] Ibid., p. 95.

[10] Morton, A History of the Canadian West, p. 134.

[11] Ibid., p. 19.

[12] Ibid., p. 11-12.

[13] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1828-29. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[14] Morton, A History of the Canadian West, p. 11. Also Ray, Indians In the Fur Trade, p. 187.

[15] Morton, A History of the Canadian West, p. 11

[16] Ibid., p. 13.

[17] Ibid., p. 145.

[18] Geographic Board of Canada, Handbook, pp. 117-119.

[19] Ray, Indians In the Fur Trade, pp. 171-172.

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[20] Geographic Board of Canada, Handbook, pp. 45-46.

[21] Ibid., p. 95.

[22] Morton, A History of the Canadian West., p. 11. Also Ray, Indians in the Fur Trade, p. 187.

[23] Ray, Indians in the Fur Trade, p. 98. Also Frederick Merk, ed. Fur Trade and Empire: George Simpson's Journal 1824-25 (Cambridge, 1931), p. 20n. Also Fort Assiniboine post journal, October 1828. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[24] Morton, A History of the Canadian West, p. 328.

[25] H.A. Dempsey, Historic Sites of the Province of Alberta (Edmonton, 1952), p. 9.

[26] Morton, A History of the Canadian West, pp. 608-609.

[27] Dempsey, Historic Sites of the Province of Alberta. p. 7.

[28] Ernest Voorhis, Historic Forts and Trading Posts of the French Regime and of the English Fur Trading Companies (Ottawa, 1930), p. 103. In addition, the map made by David Thompson for the North West Company in 1813-14 shows posts belonging to this concern situated at the confluences of the Pembina and McLeod Rivers with the Athabasca. This map is contained in Tyrrell's edition of Thompson's Narrative, published by the Champlain Society.

[29] Morton, A History of the Canadian West, p. 411.

[30] Tyrrell, ed. David Thompson's Narrative, pp. lxxviii-xcviii.

[31] Morton, A History of the Canadian West, pp. 618, 711-713.

[32] W.G.P. Allen, The Trail Through the Pembina Valley 1790-1912 (unpublished manuscript), pp. 36. 207.

[33] Ibid., p. 61.

[34] W.K. Lamb, ed. The Journal of Gabriel Franchère 1811-1814 (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1969), pp. 159-165.

[35] Ibid., p. 163.

[36] Morton, A History of the Canadian West, pp. 433-434.

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The first Fort Assiniboine, also known as Fort La Souris, was built by the North West Company on the Assiniboine River, two miles north of the mouth of the Souris River, in 1793.

[37] R.H. Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department of Rupert Land, 1821-31 (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1940), p. xxv.

[38] Ibid., p. 45.

[39] Lesser Slave Lake district journal, 1822-23. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 115/a/6. This note was given to me by D. Babcock, author of A Regional History of Lesser Slave Lake (unpublished manuscript). Also E.E. Rich, Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870 (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1959), Vol. II, p. 439.

[40] Governor's Papers, Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 4/2, fo. 40. Cited in Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 45, footnote 1.

[41] Lesser Slave Lake District journal, 1822-23.

[42] Edmonton post journal, October 4, 1823. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/22.

[43] Governor's Papers, Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 4/3, fo. 39. Cited in Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 45, footnote 1.

[44] E.J. Holmgren and P.M. Holmgren, 2000 Place Names of Alberta, (Saskatoon, 1972), p. 62. Work is described as being on his way to the Columbia in Archie Binns, Peter Skene Ogden: Fur Trader (Portland, 1967), p. 75.

[45] Edmonton post journals, 1823-24 and 1833-34. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/22,28. Parisien left Fort Assiniboine for Red River after 11 years' service at the former post.

[46] Servants' Characters and Staff Records 1822-1832. Hudson's Bay Archives, A. 34/1-2.

[47] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 46.

[48] W.P. Baergen, The Fur Trade At Lesser Slave Lake, 1815-1831 (unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Alberta, 1967), p. 116.

[49] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. xxxvii.

[50] Ibid., p. 146.

[51] Edmonton Post journal, 1823-24. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/22. The location of Whitemud House or Old Whitemud Fort, was at a point near the mouth of Wabamun Creek. See J.G. MacGregor, A History of Alberta (Edmonton, 1972), p. 33.

[52] Binns, Peter Skene Ogden, pp. 75, 84 and Edmonton Post journal, October 6, 1823. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/22. Ogden's family is noted as having made their way from Fort Assiniboine to Edmonton with Ranald McDonald. This would have been prior to the clearing of the portage trail between the two posts in 1824.

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Chapter 2

Fort Assiniboine 1824-1861:

Years of Greatest Versatility and Importance

The year 1824 was an important one for Fort Assiniboine. During that year the post was elevated from a simple trading establishment to include among its functions that of being a way station on a transcontinental trade artery. It also became an important way station in the local network of the Saskatchewan District. Both of these changes were by virtue of a horse trail between Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine which was ordered to be constructed in the autumn of 1824 by George Simpson. This road connected the Athabasca River route via Athabasca Pass to Fort Vancouver, and later Fort Victoria, with the Saskatchewan River system and related river systems to York Factory, thus completing the links of the transcontinental chain. In terms of the Saskatchewan District, the road connected the posts of Jasper House and Lesser Slave Lake through Fort Assiniboine to Edmonton. Later Lac Ste. Anne, south of Fort Assiniboine, was also added to the list of posts connected to Edmonton by the trail. This period, which continued through Outfit 1860, was that of Fort Assiniboine's greatest importance and versatility. Eventually administrative developments within the Hudson's Bay Company led to the abandonment of the overland route and the end of Fort Assiniboine's transcontinental significance. The post then reverted to the status of a way

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station of local importance, which was somewhat diminished by local developments, and a fur trade post.

The Origin of the Edmonton-Fort Assiniboine Trail

The origin of the trail forms the first subject for discussion. As stated above, this trail (see Maps 1 to 4) was ordered to be constructed through the forested country from Fort Assiniboine to Edmonton in 1824; the order was given by George Simpson when he journeyed to the Pacific coast from York Factory in that year.[1] Thus the trail was not extant or in use prior to this date. Although there had been travel between Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine during the year of Outfit 1823 as described in the previous chapter,[2] no evidence exists that any recognized, established trail had been cut between the two points. W.G.P. Allen, whose work The Trail Through the Pembina Valley 1790-1912 was discussed in the previous chapter, propounds certain ideas on the subject of the trail's origin. He states that David Thompson, on his way from Fort William west to Lesser Slave Lake in 1802, travelled over the trail between Edmonton and the site of Fort Assiniboine.[3] J.B. Tyrell declares, on this subject, that although Thompson's route is unclear from his journals, he probably travelled overland from Augustus (Edmonton) to Athabasca River.[4] Thus it is not indicated that any definite trail existed. Allen proceeds to state that the North West Company used the Augustus-Athabasca Pass route from 1811, with one Marcel Dubois serving as trail master from that date to 1833.[5] Mr. Allen does not justify his statements with references to sources, and there is no record of any Marcel Dubois in such a position for the Hudson's Bay Company. Allen's arguments are thus very questionable. There was no regular or established trail between Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine before the construction of the track ordered by Simpson in 1824, as far as evidence indicates.

The construction order for the trail came from Simpson in the course of a journey from York Factory to Fort George on the Pacific coast in 1824-25. The old route to the Pacific coast was from York Factory via the Hayes River and Lake Winnipeg to the Saskatchewan River as far as Cumberland House, where the route swung north to the Churchill River system and by way of it to the Athabasca River. This river was then ascended to Jasper House, where the travellers, brigades, Columbia express, etc. crossed the Athabasca Pass to Boat Encampment on the Columbia River, which they descended to Fort Vancouver and Fort George. Simpson proposed to replace the Hayes-Saskatchewan sector and get to the Churchill from York Factory by the Nelson River and its tributary the Burntwood River, and then go on as before.[6] On this trip, the most important objective of which was to inspect the Columbia District,[7] Simpson tried his proposed route, and proceeded, arriving at Fort Assiniboine on October 2, 1824. On the way there he had severe trouble with the practically

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unnavigable Beaver River, part of the Churchill system, due to its very low water level and resultant difficulty for the canoes in their passage.[8]

The journal entries in Merk's Fur Trade and Empire for the time during which Simpson was at Fort Assiniboine contain the mention of his reasons for his decision to have the trail constructed. John Rowand, the officer in charge of the Saskatchewan District, had left York Factory with his district's outfit in July 1824, while Simpson had not departed until August 15 of that year.[9] Rowand, travelling by the Saskatchewan River to Edmonton and thence overland to Fort Assiniboine, had arrived at the post four days before Simpson, hoping to confer with the Governor. Rowand, however, had been pressed by affairs at Edmonton and had had to return there. Simpson wrote in his journal that Rowand's speed from York Factory in addition to the defects of the Beaver River route resulted in his decision to effect new transport arrangements to go into effect immediately:

> ...the circumstances of Mr. Rowands having got to this place from Edmonton after accompanying his loaded Brigade from York thereby performing the Voyage in ... Days shews how much shorter the route is by the Saskatchawaine than by the Beaver River and accounts for some arrangements I am about to suggest and have taken steps for carrying into effect without further delay which I have no doubt the Honble. Committee & Council will approve. From several remarks in the course of this narrative will be seen the tediousness and uncertainty of the Beaver River

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> Navigation even to half laden North Canoes rendering the voyage extremely harassing to the people requiring much expensive and precautionary arrangement in regard to provisions assistance from Freemen &c&c and in dry Seasons incurring the risk of not getting to the Wintering Grounds before the Ice sets in, but above all, the heavy expence occasioned by this route in Men's Wages it being impossible to substitute Boats for Canoes.[10]

Simpson then proceeded to illustrate in his journal the proposed transport system. It was a concise, economical, and efficient plan. The brigades for Cumberland House, and the districts of Saskatchewan and Lesser Slave Lake, and the Columbia express were to travel together from York to Cumberland House, where that post's outfit would be dropped off. The rest would continue to Edmonton by the Saskatchewan River where the outfit for the Lesser Slave Lake District and the Columbia express would proceed to Fort Assiniboine and then transfer to boats. The Lesser Slave Lake District outfit would proceed down the Athabasca River, up the Lesser Slave Lake River and on to the post. The Columbia express would ascend the Athabasca to Jasper House (sometimes referred to as the Rocky Mountain House) cross the Athabasca Pass to Boat Encampment, and descend the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver, the headquarters of the Columbia District. This fall routine would be reversed in the spring to bring the returns and Columbia express to York Factory. Simpson planned by using this route to achieve better

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protection from the hostile plains tribes (with the strong brigade) and to decrease the number of men needed for transport from 79 to 45 by the abandonment of the Beaver River route and its associated problems. This route required the use of more men in the North canoes than were needed in York boats and also required men to bring provisions from the Saskatchewan and hunt in the area for provisions. Simpson contemplated that this new route would save the Company £1,000 per annum.[11] Simpson then declared that to illustrate the practicality of the new route, the returns of Fort Assiniboine would be taken out in the spring of 1825 over the track he had bargained to have cut by Jacques Cardinal, a well-known freeman of the area, and that he would return to York Factory by the new route.[12] It would thus seem that at first glance Simpson was influenced into selecting the new route by the two factors described above - Rowand's speed in getting to Fort Assiniboine and the various defects of the Beaver River. However, other evidence conclusively proves that Simpson had the idea of the track in mind before he arrived at Fort Assiniboine.

Simpson did not specifically list the resulting benefits of abandoning the difficult Beaver River route - affording greater protection for the brigades, and economy in terms of men and money - among his reasons for selecting the route in his journal entries, but they obviously played a part in his decision. It is unlikely that

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Simpson considered these factors and worked out the travel arrangements described above solely on one day in Fort Assiniboine after a decision based on Rowand's trip and the Beaver River. E.E. Rich declares that Simpson was constantly pondering such a plan, and describes the factors not mentioned by Simpson as causes of his decision.[13] The fact that Simpson had made this decision prior to his arrival at Fort Assiniboine is illustrated by two early decisions. He made a bargain with Jacques Cardinal to cut the road during the winter and spring of 1824-25. This bargain, however, was not made at Fort Assiniboine, but on Portage La Biche at a point on or near the banks of the lake of the same name, on September 21, 1824.[14] Simpson said in his entry for that day:

> With Cardinal the Freeman I made an agreement that he should in the course of this ensuing Winter and Spring get a Horse track or road cut from Fort Assiniboine to Edmonton House Saskatchewaine which I shall have occasion to speak upon hereafter.[15]

Simpson arranged for the trail to be cut before he reached Fort Assiniboine. Secondly, there is evidence to indicate that Simpson had decided during the summer of 1824 to experiment with organized communication between Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine. The latter's outfit of 30 pieces was to go in one boat manned by six men with the Saskatchewan brigade to Edmonton and thence overland to its destination.[16] This measure was a resolution of the

Council of the Northern Department. Simpson was present at this meeting[17] and as Governor must have had an influence on the decision. In all likelihood the plan for the trail was already germinating in his mind and he wanted to investigate its feasibility. Thus, although the actual arrangements for its construction were not made until the autumn of 1824, George Simpson was making plans for the project shortly prior to that time.

Whether or not the idea of the trail was wholly Simpson's is a matter for conjecture. The Governor, in the course of his return journey in 1825 to York Factory, noted in his journal that he was the only one to have thought of the idea and all credit thus belonged to him.[18] W.P. Baergen, however, in an M.A. thesis entitled The Fur Trade at Lesser Slave Lake 1815-1831, says that Chief Trader William Connolly, in charge at Lesser Slave Lake, had advocated use of the Saskatchewan route and so on to supply Lesser Slave Lake in his annual report for 1823. Mr. Baergen's only citation on this subject quotes Connolly as saying that the transport system was his greatest problem.[19] This is too brief and vague, in my opinion, to dispose of Simpson's assertion. Also, it seems odd that the Governor would have made the statement he did if Connolly had mentioned the trail in his report, which Simpson due to his office must have seen. Therefore, it must be concluded that although other persons might have conceived the idea of the Fort Assiniboine-

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Edmonton route and the consequent arrangements for the trade, no certain evidence has come to light that such was the case. "Right of discovery" belongs to Simpson.

The trail was cut during the winter and spring of 1824-25, and Simpson travelled over it on his return to York Factory, remarking that it was passably good for horses but not carriages or sleds. Chief Factor McIntosh of Fort Assiniboine had left for Edmonton with his returns shortly before Simpson arrived.[20] The road was to become an important part of the route from York Factory to the Pacific, and Fort Assiniboine a key post on it. It made Edmonton an important traverse point[21] as well, to which were tied the Lesser Slave Lake District posts, and the Columbia and New Caledonia Districts through the passage of their express, employees, and certain sundries. In effect a major route change for the Company took place, which reinforced the importance of the Saskatchewan route. E.E. Rich says of the new route:

> It was a shrewd and well-planned project, which worked well and which the self-confident little Governor put into action before his Council had a chance to discuss and approve it. He reckoned on a certain saving of a thousand pounds a year, and events justified him; the horse-route became an undisputed part of the overland road from Canada to the Rockies.[22]

A Year of Transition

The year 1824-25 can thus be seen as a transitional one for Fort Assiniboine. While not officially attached to the Saskatchewan District, it received its supplies

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by that sector of the Northern Department. One important outcome of the decision to clear the trail was Simpson's corresponding directive in his journal that Fort Assiniboine was to be attached to the Saskatchewan District.[23] Thus during this year Fort Assiniboine underwent a reorientation from the Lesser Slave Lake District to the Saskatchewan District, and particularly Edmonton. It received its outfit through Edmonton, and, as mentioned above, its returns went out by this route. Thus Chief Factor McIntosh's trip to Edmonton and through to York Factory with the returns is the first known instance of a payload travelling over the newly-constructed trail. Another indication of the new tie to Edmonton was with regard to staff. On his stopover in 1825, Simpson decided that George Deschambeault, the clerk in charge in McIntosh's absence, was too inexperienced for even temporary command of a post. He resolved to replace him for the summer with either Patrick Small or Henry Fisher, Jr. from Edmonton.[24] Fisher was selected.[25] Thus, as part of the transition, Edmonton became a staff base for the other post, a trend which was to continue. Another facet of the attachment to Edmonton was that Fort Assiniboine was to be open in the summer of 1825 and attached to the Saskatchewan District; this measure of the Council of the Northern Department (passed in July 1824)[26] bears perhaps further evidence of Simpson's plans for the new arrangement being partly or wholly formulated prior to his

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arrival at Fort Assiniboine in October 1824. The year 1824-25 can, then, be seen to have been an important one for the post, marking its transition from a simple trading establishment of the Lesser Slave Lake District to an important way station, in the Saskatchewan District.

During this year of transition the winter staff consisted of approximately eight men: Chief Factor William McIntosh; clerk George Deschambeault; and a number of servants. These servants were: summermen Pierre Lemai or Lemais, who also used the surname Delorme, and Jean-Baptiste Parisien; middlemen Enos Delorme and Joseph Lafevre; steersman Ayette Gonrague; foreman Jacques Aranian, and a man of undisclosed rank named Pauvis.[27] During the summer of 1825 Henry Fisher Jr. replaced Deschambeault. The other men at the post during the summer were Parisien, who had a wife and six children, and a man named Bernier who had a wife and two children.[28] The others would have been employed with McIntosh in crewing the Saskatchewan brigade to York Factory. This number of men on staff does not represent an increase over the staff level of 1823-24; 1824 is simply the first outfit about which good information on the staff appears. During 1824-25, the routine activities around the fort most likely closely resembled those of the previous year. Trade was carried on, 871 beaver being taken in.[29] The servants spent their time in gathering provisions, repairing buildings, and doing other such menial tasks, while the traders would be occupied with dealing with their customers, keeping accounts and journals, and correspondence. There were exceptions to this in regard to the trail. Preparations were undoubtedly made for the new role of way station which would be assumed the following year; a stable and corrals were probably constructed; there would have been activity in provisioning Cardinal, who was cutting the trail; horses for the portage might have been received from Edmonton. In the spring the returns left, probably in late April, on their way to York Factory over the new trail, and there was movement of men and supplies to and communication with Edmonton over the summer. Unfortunately the post journal for this year, which could undoubtedly shed light on this subject, is missing.

The period comprising Outfits 1825 to 1860 forms the next subject for consideration. The trail and new network came into regular local and transcontinental use during Outfit 1825, and the last recorded transcontinental movements through Fort Assiniboine occurred in the year of Outfit 1860. This period thus marks the time of Fort Assiniboine's full fruition as a trading post and as a local and transcontinental way station. The treatment here of this period will be a topical one, beginning with the domestic aspects of the post at this time, and going on to discuss its relationships with other posts of the Saskatchewan District and with the other districts of the Company's trade structure. In the interests of

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convenience some trends, aspects, etc. which are also true for the year 1824-25 will be discussed in order to avoid repetition.

Fort Assiniboine: Domestic History

The first aspect of Fort Assiniboine's domestic history during this period is its staff. This staff was never very large; the number was greatest in 1832-33, when it stood at ten.[30] The outline of the staff in Appendix 1 shows that this period can be partitioned on the basis of the ranks of the men in charge during the winter. For the first two years, 1824-26, men of high rank occupied this office, a chief factor and chief trader. The next period consists of the years from 1826-27 to 1832-33, when this office was occupied by clerks, men of lower rank than either of the above. The final period is that from 1833-34 to 1860-61, when the vast majority of men in charge during the winter were postmasters, interpreters, or labourers, of even lower rank than clerks. Only during the years 1839-40 to 1841-42 was the post in charge of a clerk again. This survey suggests a gradual decline in the post's importance, reflected in the ranks of its masters. Moreover, during the final period four instances occur of the fort not being mentioned in the minutes of the Council of the Northern Department; it was probably closed, with men bringing horses and provisions from Edmonton to service people travelling through, such as the Columbia express.

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These instances occurred in the following years: 1842-43; 1844-45; the summer of 1851; and 1857-58. This will be discussed again in due course. Unfortunately the post journals for Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine and further records of the latter post do not exist for these years and thus it is extremely difficult if not impossible to ascertain the validity of the minutes of the Council of the Northern Department. As has been seen in the case of McDonald and La Rocque in the first chapter, the Council's decisions were sometimes changed and other arrangements made at the posts.[31] However, it can be seen that managers of low rank were the rule and that closures most likely occurred during the last half of this period.

The practices involved in the staffing of Fort Assiniboine bear some examination. First of all, the manager of the post was not always in residence there; this is illustrated in the case of George Linton in the summer of 1828. The summer staff at Fort Assiniboine for that year was to be one clerk and one man.[32] The clerk in charge, however, whose identity was not specified by the Council of the Northern Department, was George Linton. He was given instructions by John Rowand that he was to visit Fort Assiniboine as often as needed during the summer to supply trading articles, provisions, etc. Parisien was to reside there over the summer.[33] Thus the manager of the fort actually resided at Edmonton and commuted when necessary to his post. There is a good

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possibility that the same arrangement was the case in the winter of 1832-33. Although Richard Grant is listed in the Fort Assiniboine account book as a servant at that place[34] (all employees being listed as servants) and is mentioned as having arrived from his post (Fort Assiniboine) at Edmonton on May 10, 1833,[35] there is evidence to indicate that Grant did not reside at the fort over the winter. Its outfit left Edmonton under the charge of "5 young lads" and Colin Fraser on September 7, 1832, without Grant. He was mentioned on September 23, as having remained at Edmonton with Rowand, J.E. Harriott, and Patrick Small.[36] Thus it is possible that in succeeding years the manager was not always a resident at his post. This may account for the statement by Dr. Hector of the Palliser expedition that the fort was deserted when he arrived there on January 16, 1859.[37] The Council of the Northern Department had appointed Antoine Rennier, Interpreter to the charge of Fort Assiniboine for the winter and summer of 1858-59.[38] This process could thus have extended over nearly the whole period. The Fort Assiniboine journals prove that the men in charge, Linton and Grant, were in residence for the winters of both years.[39] The summers, however, are not covered by the journals. The Edmonton journals, which cover the period under discussion here with several gaps, noted in the bibliography, do not definitely indicate whether or not the manager was in residence for a given year. In the case of

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Richard Grant, discussed above, the Edmonton journal possibly but not definitely indicates that he resided at Edmonton over the winter of 1832-33 and commuted to Fort Assiniboine. The minutes of the Council of the Northern Department, as in the case of Hector and Rennier above, are not always a certain source of proceedings at the post. Thus, it is possible that during most of this period, the fort was not the place of residence of its manager. Whether or not it was is impossible to decide, as shown in the discussion of sources.

What of those who formed the balance of the staff during these years? Apart from the manager of the post, the staff consisted of men of lower rank. In the first two years there were clerks subordinate to Chief Factor McIntosh and Chief Trader McMillan, but with the progressive qualitative decline in the ranks of the managers as described above, the subordinate men came to consist of the lowest orders of the Company: interpreters, middlemen, summermen, labourers, and Indians and freemen hired as fort hunters. It can be seen that the vast majority of these men were French-Canadians or mixed-bloods of French-Canadian parentage.[40] They were probably old fur trade employees or descendants thereof known as "freemen", who were hired by the Company, probably locally, to serve at the post. Jacques Cardinal, who cut the trail to Edmonton and who was a horsekeeper at the post in 1826-27,[41] was a well-known freeman of the area.[42] It can be seen that the number of these employees varied between two and ten.[43] These numbers, however, are known definitely only for the years for which journals or account books for Fort Assiniboine and the Edmonton post journals exist. The appointments in the minutes of the Council of the Northern Department often do not specify the number of these employees, and thus although the number of "other employees" may be noted as "unknown" it is quite likely that they existed. More concrete information is simply not available in these cases. For example, in 1836 the Council appointed John Rowand, Jr., Postmaster for the winter:

> 28. Winter Arrangements --
> Saskatchewan - Fort Assiniboine,
> John Rowand, Jr., P.M.[44]

The post account book for that year reveals, however, that seven servants were on the staff.[45] Thus there were possibly a number, however small, of these men at the fort in most of the years of this period. In October 1846, however, Paul Kane noted that only a common horsekeeper was there.[46] This would have been the labourer appointed by the Council of the Northern Department.[47] Thus sometimes the fort's number of servants was in the neighbourhood of four to ten men, while at others it consisted of one man, or none at all. Undoubtedly some of the men were occupied in the summer with crewing the Saskatchewan brigade to York Factory, leaving the others at the post. In times when only one man, as in 1846-47, was at the fort during the winter, others might have been

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sent from Edmonton to relieve him or increase the numbers at Fort Assiniboine to bring provisions, repair boats, etc.

From this discussion it can be seen that the fort must have been an inexpensive operation to the Company. The low ranks and equally low wages of most of its small staff were the cause of this. In 1832-33, for example, the wage outlay for the Company amounted to £157; Grant, the clerk earned £100/yr., J.-B. Parisien and Antoine Auger both received £20/yr., and Baptiste Parisien £17/yr.[48] Henry J. Moberly commented 22 years later in the summer of 1855 that expenses were still small; the staff consisted of an interpreter at £30/yr. and a man at £17/yr.[49] It might seem that, from the small staff, the total population at the fort was equally small. It would be somewhat larger than this, however, because some of the men often had families. During the summer of 1825, the total population numbered 13 souls; Henry Fisher, Jr., J.-B. Parisien with his wife and six children, and Bernier with his wife and two children. During the winter of 1825, with the addition of McMillan Deschambeault, Beauchamp, Portelance, Lamoine, and Pierre Delorme and his son, the fort's population would have been 20.[50] Changes in population are almost impossible to calculate as the number of employees present in many of the years is unknown; toward the end of the period, however, it is probable that with the apparent closures and decreases in

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staff the fort population decreased. It was possibly greatest during the period 1824/25 to 1836/37. At any rate, very little is known on this subject after this period.

In the above discussion of the staff it was stated that the ranks of the men in charge progressively became lower and closures seem to have occurred in certain years. This is directly related to the value and importance of the post as a trading establishment. It did not require a high-ranking personage as a manager, because its value as a trading station was not very high. Although the appointments of McIntosh and McMillan seem to contradict this, they can be explained. The post must have seemed a potentially bountiful one, undoubtedly very much so. This would explain the appointments of three persons of high commissioned rank in the first three years. (It will be remembered from Chapter 1 that Chief Trader Felix Joseph La Rocque had been appointed to the charge of Fort Assiniboine in 1823. The reason for his replacement by clerk Ranald McDonald is unclear). However, it must have soon been apparent that the volume and complexity of trade at the fort was not very great. Its chief function became that of a way station; it did not need chief factors or chief traders to run such a post, and henceforth no one of a higher rank than clerk, and many of a lower one, was put in charge of the post. Moreover, as has been stated above, it apparently experienced several closures during this

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period. The reason for this was that it was probably not receiving a sufficient volume of trade to profitably require someone being there all the time; horses, provisions, etc. would be sent there when required for travellers, who came through continually during this period and during the closures. In 1842-43, for example, when the fort seems to have been closed,[52] 22 men destined for the Columbia and New Caledonia Districts were to proceed to Edmonton and over the route to the Athabasca and Yellowhead Passes to their destinations.[53] This is not to say that Fort Assiniboine brought in no returns; the returns shown in Appendix 2 reveal that it did bring in a varied and lucrative amount of furs. However, these returns and other factors to be discussed, in addition to the managers' ranks and the apparent closures, reveal that Fort Assiniboine was a good but not greatly important post for furs. Its main function during the period under discussion in this chapter was transport.

The tables of returns reproduced in Appendix 2 reveal that the fort's productivity was of a varying and somewhat waning sort. During the first three years of its existence it brought, in conjunction with the Saskatchewan and Lesser Slave Lake Districts, 21,189 beaver.[54] Its return in beaver for 1824-25 was 871;[55] in 1826-27 it was limited to one-half of the average returns for the previous 3 years, in conjunction with Lesser Slave Lake. The Saskatchewan District was limited to one-fifth of its average returns for that period.[56] In that restricted year, the post brought in 1,061 beaver. This total dropped to 672 for Outfit 1832, and then rose slightly to 852 for Outfit 1836. The figures for marten during these years, 2,741, 235, and finally 1,139 respectively, equally show the fluctuating character of the trade at the post. It also waned somewhat, an increase taking place in 1836-37 over 1832-33 but not equalling the best year of the three; 1826-27. The statistics on profits follow the same pattern. On the other hand, the trade in bear, muskrat and skins shows a definite improvement through these three years. The numerical value of the returns shows the waning side of the trade.[57] These trends can of course only be broadly described, as only records of a few sets of returns exist for perusal and each year from 1824 to 1860 cannot be carefully checked.

The fluctuating and waning character of the fur trade at the post is also suggested by the size of its outfits. The outfit for 1824 was 30 pieces; that for the next year was smaller. James McMillan and four men left with their outfit for Fort-Assiniboine in September 1825 with 13 horses.[58] Even if their saddle stock is not mentioned and all 13 were pack horses, carrying two packs or pieces each, this would still only have amounted to 26 pieces of goods. The outfit for 1832-33 was combined with that of Rocky Mountain House and comprised 12 packs on six horses. It consisted, as did the other two outfits described in the post records, of the usual trade goods of a Hudson's Bay Company post at this time: Indian awls, beads, blankets, guns, flints, knives, cloth and other trade articles.[59] By 1854-55 the outfit had shrunk to that carried by seven horses, which would have been 14 pieces.[60] By 1856-57, it had undergone an increase of 12 pieces (13 horses).[61] In all of these cases, the Fort Assiniboine outfit was a shrinking fraction of the total outfit for the Saskatchewan District. For 1825-26 the outfit for the latter was 240 pieces.[62] By 1854, the total Saskatchewan outfit was 750 pieces. In two years' time the Saskatchewan District outfit had grown to 900 pieces.[63] The outfit for the post in 1856-57 was the same amount as it had been 31 years earlier, while the total district outfit had nearly quadrupled. At the same time it is useful to examine the post of Lesser Slave Lake in this regard. In 1832-33 the outfit for the post of Lesser Slave Lake was six to 12 pieces.[64] By 1854-55 the outfit had increased to 86 pieces on 43 horses,[65] while only seven horses went to Fort Assiniboine. Although only 35 horses carried Lesser Slave Lake's outfit in 1856-57, it was larger than that carried by the 13-horse Fort Assiniboine brigade.[66] Clearly Lesser Slave Lake, which in 1823 was almost abandoned as noted in Chapter 1, had eclipsed its supposed replacement[67] and had probably drawn the Indians there from Fort Assiniboine.

Fort Assiniboine certainly experienced a reluctance of the natives to come and trade. This trend, which had also occurred in 1823-24,[68] is documented by several examples. Linton said on his arrival at Fort Assiniboine in 1828-29 that there had been only sparse trading with Stonies and Crees that summer. Throughout the winter the journal entries are concerned for the most part with gathering provisions, cutting firewood, and other menial tasks. There are few entries concerned with trading. Lesser Slave Lake was closed that year and Linton had to send some of his men out to service the Indians there and return with their furs. Few Indians came to trade during this winter, and some told Linton in May that the next year they would go to Jasper House, where they had less trouble in getting food. One large band of Assiniboines, 27 in number not counting women, boys and children arrived on October 13, 1828. Linton received about 300 beaver and some swan skins, moose hides, and castorum from these people. There were a few other transactions with Indians and freemen, but these were few and far between.[69] The same was true for the winter of 1830-31. The largest single transaction was for 120 furs and 50 dressed moose skins with a party of 13 Assiniboines in May, 1831. The other entries about transactions are very few and the transactions were small. The road to Edmonton, which was continually being blocked with deadfall and bogs was also, it seems, a barrier to trade at times. An Assiniboine called Little Crow told Grant in May, 1831 that the road discouraged the Indians from coming

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and that they wanted to be met at their encampment at Lac La Nonne.[70] There is thus evidence to show that although Fort Assiniboine brought in a respectable number of returns, it was, as a fur post, of fluctuating and waning value.

It is convenient at this point to discuss the relationship of the fort with the natives in the area. There was of course the aspect of trade. The Indians and freemen would pick up their supplies in the fall and then trade furs, moose hides, swan skins, etc. in the winter and spring to pay off their fall advances and obtain supplies for the summer. This was the purpose behind the visit of Little Crow to Grant described above. There were other facets of this relationship with the Crees, Assiniboines, Saulteaux,[71] and métis[72] population of the area. One was that the fort was a place of charity when they were starving or sick; Linton fed some fish to a couple of starving Indian women in February, 1829.[73] Sometimes when the Indians would arrive to trade and get supplies in the fall they would be given liquor as a reward for the summer's good behaviour and as an incentive to winter production. This happened, for example, in September, 1828 when the large band of Assiniboines referred to above arrived.[74] The last aspect of the relationship was one of employment; the journals contain references to Indian hunters such as Che a (see below) hired by the Company. Che a brought in two reindeer on February 11, 1831.[75]

The Indian bands who inhabited the area from 1828 to 1831 were described in the post journals as follows: the Diperis, Français, Wolf, and Bull bands of Assiniboines, and some other bands of this tribe whose names were illegible; and also some bands of Crees. These Crees were from the Pembina River and there were also some Slave Lake Crees from the Smoky River area, although these people were not residents of the immediate area of the post. The Français and Bull bands of the Assiniboines were from the vicinity of McLeod's Branch. Among the Assiniboines a number of individuals were named: Bull, Diperis, The Français (who may have been the leaders of these bands) and his son, le Petit, You-Yare, his brother Blue Earth Son, Fere Cassée, The Little Crow, Vieux, and the Cree-Speaking Son. The most important of the Assiniboines, Grant noted, were Napuckeway and his stepson LaBiche. There were also a number of Indians whose tribal identity was not specified in the journals: Man-ne-nah, Putchabais, Misassquoit, his brothers the Little Englishman and Aganash, and his father-in-law Che a. Bull and Diperis and the bands of the same name were mentioned in both 1828-29 and 1830-31. Throughout the journals are references to starvation among the Indians, a sign of the continuous scarcity of game at the post. The Indians sometimes buried their dead at the fort; on March 27 Fere Cassée buried his son alongside his grandfather at the fort. This same Indian abandoned his mother to die of

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starvation and cold as she was a liability to him. Grant discovered this in March, 1831 and sent men out to help her; she was found dead. He referred to Fere Cassée as a "scoundrel"; obviously there were at times collisions between the white and red cultures.[76]

Apart from trading with Indians and freemen, what were the activities which occupied the time of those employees who lived at the fort? What was life like at the fort? The most apparent activity was the endless job of gathering provisions. The area of Fort Assiniboine provided little in the way of sustenance, as the experience of the Indians and Linton's comment that it was a poor area for game shows.[77] The value of the fort gardens is uncertain. While Linton said that the ground was nothing but rocks and sand,[78] Henry J. Moberly in 1855 declared that:

> At Fort Assiniboine the common garden vegetables, such as potatoes, turnips, cabbages, parsnips and beets, were successfully grown.[79]

At any rate the journals for both years reveal that the greatest amount of the men's time was spent in gathering food. The main source of food was the fishery at Lac La Nonne, over 30 miles away. Thousands of fish were taken, the activity extending right over the winter. As of October 26, 1828, 1,700 fish had been taken. By February 18, 1829, there were 2,000 in the shed built at the lake.[80] Grant noted on November 8, 1830 that one man was stationed at the fishery, and by the first of December 5,000 fish were in stock at the fishery.[81] These were mostly

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whitefish, the delectability of which Paul Kane noted during his stopover there on his way to Edmonton from the Columbia in 1847. Kane also said that whitefish were caught in nearby McLeod's Lake, and that these fish comprised nearly the total diet of the post.[82] There were also efforts by the men to get meat, which was sometimes stored in caches. Barley was grown, and supplies were also received from Edmonton and some pounded meat obtained in trade with the Indians.[83]

There was also much time spent by the men of the post in gathering and carting firewood, and in maintenance of saddlery, mending traps, making ploughs, canoes, nets, etc. In spring, for example, the canoes would be patched and repaired. Linton noted on April 11, 1829 that the men were stripping bark and gathering gum for canoes. Horse and dog sleds were also made, from birch, for winter transport of meat, fish, etc.[84] Some little time was spent in recreation; the manager went to Edmonton for the Christmas season, while the men usually received a ration of liquor for Christmas and the New Year.[85] Moberly noted the arrival of officers from the district posts at Edmonton for the Christmas season of 1855.[86]

The men were also occupied in maintaining and improving the structures of the post. The buildings were whitewashed; Beauchamp and Tappage were performing this duty on October 13, 1828.[87] There were probably four or five buildings at this time: a trading hall and manager's residence in one; a stable, referred to in the journal for 1828-29;[88] and two or three houses for the men and their families. A bridge was constructed over the ice on the Athabasca River in December, 1830, and a fur press was noted as having been in use during that outfit.[89] These were added to the three buildings described by Alexander Ross in 1825,[90] and by 1859, when Hector stopped there, a kitchen and palisades, probably low, as the Indians were friendly, were present.[91] Hector found the kitchen floored, and the hall had been floored by Parisien in October, 1828.[92] The buildings were probably all floored. This is the sum total of knowledge on Fort Assiniboine's structural history, except that it possibly had corrals for horses. Most of the men's time was spent at tasks such as those described above, particularly in gathering provisions.

Life at Fort Assiniboine during the period under discussion was also affected by resolutions passed by the Council of the Northern Department applying to all posts generally, or to the Saskatchewan District. A short summary of these regulations will be made here. There were a number of years during which the post was under restrictions on its beaver returns as part of a general restriction on the Saskatchewan District to 5,500; this was the case for Outfits 1826-1832. It was restricted to half of its 1839-40 returns for Outfits 1841-1843 and possibly for several more years.[93] This was because of the Company policy to conserve the beaver population, and also because the demand for beaver pelts dropped after 1840 because of the use of silk rather than beaver wool in making hats.[94] No small rats (muskrats) were to be traded during Outfit 1840,[95] and resolutions were periodically passed that the Indians were to be discouraged from hunting cub and out-of-season beaver, using beaver for food, and that they were to be steered towards small game and fishing, as in the Standing Rules and Regulations 1827-1835 and minutes of Council 1845 and 1846.[96] Finally no cub bear were to be traded in Outfits 1837 and 1841 (Standing Rules and Regulations for that year).[97]

Fort Assiniboine was also subject to resolutions of the Council of the Northern Department requiring the Saskatchewan District to provide leather goods, provisions and "country produce" e.g. snowshoes, bear grease, etc., for the other Company areas. The Saskatchewan District was detailed to provide leather for other areas, such as New Caledonia and the Southern Department, during the following Outfits: 1825-1828, 1830-1831, 1832-1837, 1848-1860.[98] It can be seen that some leather was got in trade at the post (Outfits 1826, 1832, 1836);[99] this probably was shipped out with that from the rest of the Saskatchewan District. The fort also got in trade some pounded meat.[100] Thus it probably also shared in the tasks given to the Saskatchewan District of providing provisions to Isle à la Crosse for the Methye Portage and for other places, snowshoes (referred to by the Company as "Indian shoes"),

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bear grease, etc. in the following Outfits: 1824, 1827, 1829, 1830, 1833-1837, 1839-1841, 1843-1860.[101] The fort would have had communication with York Factory by its brigades and the winter express which was initiated in 1824 and made part of the Standing Rules and Regulations in 1842.[102] Finally, life at the post would have been influenced by the regulations passed over the years in regard to liquor, procedure, and morals. Throughout the period liquor was played down. In 1836, the Standing Rules and Regulations declared that the trade in liquor was to be phased out, and in 1841 the Standing Rules and Regulations outlawed the trade in the Company's domain.[103] This would have influenced the character of the general trade at the post and perhaps inhibited native intoxication. Other rules and regulations applying to the post were those of a procedural aspect, such as price lists for goods, the rule in 1825 forbidding clerks from messing with those of lower rank,[104] scales of wages,[105] the regulations on sales of and duties on liquor and country produce to commissioned gentlemen in 1825,[106] and the ruling in 1845 that furs be bought only from their actual hunters, to drive out free traders.[107] The last aspect of general Northern Department policy applying to the post is the moral one, exemplified in the Company's continual directions to treat Indians kindly and well and give them provisions even if they were not able to pay for them (1827-1835), and that divine service be read on Sundays to the local population.[108]

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The last aspects of Fort Assiniboine's domestic routine to be discussed are the activities of the employees in regard to the horses and to the road. The journals contain numerous entries stating that horses were lost due to wolves, straying, sickness, or accident. An example is George Linton's note of October 17-18, 1828 that six horses which had been brought from Edmonton were missing; an important loss, as they were needed to haul earth for plastering the buildings. Only two days later Linton found another 13 horses to be missing, which had strayed. One week later he noted that a number of the animals were becoming ill.[109] On November 2, 1830 Richard Grant noted that a colt had been killed and devoured by wolves, and on December 12 of that year a horse was drowned in a slough behind the establishment. During this month the wolves were being more and more troublesome, and on December 21 the mares, 21 in number, were taken to Edmonton, the males having been left at Fort Assiniboine as another man evidently could not be spared to take them to Edmonton.[110] The men were also occupied in feeding the horses in the two horseguards, one on each side of the river, and in moving them from one to the other in attempts to keep them safe from the wolves.[111] There were always problems with the horses. The men also spent time in clearing the road to Edmonton, which was continually being obstructed with fallen timber. The road from Edmonton in winter came out some miles below the post, the rest of the way being travelled on the ice,[112] as Hector did in 1859;[113] in the summer it crossed the river at what is now Holmes Crossing and proceeded to the post on the north side of the Athabasca River, as shown on the attached Maps, 1 to 4. The problem of deadfall clogging the trail to Edmonton lasted throughout this period. Hector remarked on this condition on his way to the post in January, 1859;[114] thirty years earlier George Linton had set two of his men, Delorme and Beauchamp, to clearing the road of fallen trees.[115]

Moberly, going to Fort Assiniboine from Edmonton in the summer of 1855, wrote:

> To Fort Assiniboine we used the horses and from this point travelled by boat. The track to the crossing of the Pembina was good, but thereafter we encountered swamps, fallen trees, and mosquitoes, the latter in myriads and all hungry.[116]

The problems with the horses and road were to extend over this whole period. This condition was, in addition to being an aspect of Fort Assiniboine's domestic history, a facet of its relationships with certain other posts of the Saskatchewan District and with the Columbia and New Caledonia Districts.

Fort Assiniboine: Transport Way Station in the Company Network

Fort Assiniboine's major role as a transport way station is clearly illustrated in its relationships with the other posts of the Company's territories. The most immediate of these territories was the Saskatchewan

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District, and its chief post was Edmonton.

Edmonton was an all-important base for Fort Assiniboine in regard to supply, administration, horses, and personnel. It also received some supplies and sundries from Fort Assiniboine. The trail to Edmonton was a lifeline for Fort Assiniboine, for it received its outfit and sent out its returns via the post on the Saskatchewan. As previously discussed, the outfit for 1824-25 was transported to Edmonton in company with that of the Saskatchewan District, from whence it travelled overland to the post. The first returns from Fort Assiniboine to travel over the new trail to Edmonton were those of Outfit 1824 in the spring of 1825, as per Simpson's orders of October 1824.[117] Thereafter the outfits passed to the post in the autumn soon after the brigade carrying the Saskatchewan outfit arrived from York Factory in September or October, and the returns came out to Edmonton to be shipped with those of the rest of the district to York Factory in May or June. Some examples of this pattern are provided in the Edmonton post journals. The brigade arrived from York on September 19, 1825 and the Fort Assiniboine men, who had been part of the brigade crew, left for their post with its outfit five days later. The post's returns from the outfit arrived at Edmonton on May 18, 1826. Depending on the number of horses and the condition of the trail, the trip between the posts by horse averaged about four to six days' travel.[118] In Outfit 1832, the post's outfit left Edmonton on September 7, and the

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returns arrived at Edmonton May 20.[119] In 1854 the brigade from York was late and the post's outfit did not get under way from Edmonton for its destination until October 15; the returns were not, however, late in their arrival on April 29, 1855.[120] Goods and furs passed between the two posts at other times than those noted above. Sundries were sent to Fort Assiniboine at different times throughout the year; during Outfit 1832, rat darts (muskrat spears), Smiths' pincers (blacksmith's tongs), and other such items were received from Edmonton in the months of May, August, September, October, November, January, and March.[121] Furs were also sent to Edmonton from Fort Assiniboine at other times than in the spring. On January 22, 1829 two freemen, who had arrived from Edmonton with property of some sort Linton had sent them for, went back to Edmonton with two packs of furs.[122] Thus there was year-round communication between the two posts as regards transport of outfits, goods, and returns. The same was true in regard to supply of provisions.

The provisions for the Fort Assiniboine brigades (carrying the post's outfit there from Edmonton) were prepared at Edmonton. A note in the Edmonton post journal for September 20, 1856, mentioned that pemmican was being made for the Fort Assiniboine brigade, while the outfit was being packed and other preparations being made for departure for the post. Pitch for boats was also sent to the post from Edmonton.[123] Edmonton also furnished

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provisions to Fort Assiniboine at various times throughout the year; the problems in regard to provisions at the latter post have already been discussed. On February 29, 1826, Charles Beauchamp arrived at Edmonton with mail from Fort Assiniboine to take back provisions. He went on his way again five days later.[124] Fort Assiniboine personnel were noted also in the spring of 1829 as having taken supplies back to their post.[125] In 1855, an Edmonton post journal entry of April 16 mentioned that eight bags of pemmican were sent to Fort Assiniboine.[126] The Fort Assiniboine account books recorded receipt of provisions also, such as back fat for making pemmican.[127] Thus Edmonton was an important depot for Fort Assiniboine. Occasionally small amounts of pounded meat, back fat, and grease were sent to Edmonton, as well as such trade goods as ice chisels, files, and copper kettles.[128] The provisions were probably for the Saskatchewan quotas mentioned already,[129] while the trade goods were possibly surplus at the post but required at Edmonton.

Edmonton, in addition to the functions described above, also served as a personnel base for the fort. The phenomenon of the post's managers sometimes residing at Edmonton has already been discussed.[130] An example of provision of purely Edmonton staff to Fort Assiniboine is that of a carpenter and boatbuilder named Flett. He was sent to the post during the summer of 1855 to repair boats for the use of the travellers during the coming autumn.[131]

Edmonton was also an important stock base for the other post in that a great number of the horses which transported people, goods, provisions, furs, etc. over the trail were based at Edmonton. The greatest number mentioned at Fort Assiniboine was 65, in 1825.[132] The danger from wolves, discussed previously, resulted in most of the horses being kept in the Edmonton horseguards where, in 1854, 400 horses were quartered.[133] In the spring of 1831, 45 horses were brought to Fort Assiniboine for the soon-to-be-arriving brigades from Lesser Slave Lake, and Jasper House and for the Columbia express, and two years earlier horses had had to be brought to the post for Simpson and his party to cross the portage to Edmonton.[134] Occasionally horses were brought to Edmonton from Fort Assiniboine to transport material over the trail, as in 1825 when George Deschambeault, Parisien, and two others arrived at Edmonton with 49 horses from their post for the transport of the outfits and Columbia express.[135] This is a very high number, however; there is no more mention of such a large number of horses remaining at Fort Assiniboine in either the Edmonton or Fort Assiniboine post journals.[136] Edmonton was the horse base for the post and its rôle of providing horses for the transport of the various outfits and express to Fort Assiniboine was defined in the minutes of the Council of the Northern Department, 1825-1836.[137] This arrangement was, of course, continued after that date. Sixty-four of 78 Company horses which had transported the

Jasper House, Lesser Slave Lake, and Fort Assiniboine brigades to the latter post were returned to Edmonton on September 26, 1854.[138]

From this analysis of the relationship between Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine it can be seen that the former was an overall depot for the latter. Contained in this function was that of an administrative center. The York Factory winter express through Rupert's Land was received through Edmonton, as were orders from Chief Factor John Rowand, for example to send to Edmonton some papers required by him.[139] What effect did the advent of the trail have upon Edmonton, apart from tying Fort Assiniboine much more securely to it? The trail's effect was to increase the importance and horse population of Edmonton considerably, as it became, through Fort Assiniboine, a major center for travel and transport to Lesser Slave Lake, Lac Ste. Anne, Jasper House, and the Columbia and New Caledonia Districts. This transmountain traffic, which had once flowed through the Churchill River system to the Athabasca and onward, was diverted to the Saskatchewan and on through Edmonton by the Edmonton-Fort Assiniboine trail.

The relationship of Fort Assiniboine with the post at Lesser Slave Lake was one of supply and communication, which continued throughout the period of Outfits 1825-1860 except for the years during which the post at Lesser Slave Lake was closed.[140] The outfits and people for Lesser

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Slave Lake, beginning in 1825, went with the Saskatchewan brigade to Edmonton, on horseback to Fort Assiniboine, and from there by water to Lesser Slave Lake. Chief Factor John Clarke was the first to take the outfit over this route,[141] in accordance with the following Council resolutions:

> 26. ... That 50 pieces in a Boat manned by 7 men Constitute the current Outfit for that District and that these accompany the Saskatchewan Brigade to Edmonton from whence the said Outfit is to be transported overland by the requisite Horses to Fort Asseniboan and thence to be embarked in craft already provided.
>
> 27. That J. Clarke C.F. be directed to have the Slave Lake returns conveyed to Fort Asseniboan on or before the 5th May proxo. for the purpose of being taken across to Edmonton and thence to this depot in company with the Saskatchewan Brigade.[142]

The brigade left Edmonton on 36 horses with the outfit on September 24, 1825, in company with the Fort Assiniboine brigade. The returns arrived at Edmonton via Fort Assiniboine on May 19, 1826.[143] The returns from the summer passed through Fort Assiniboine as well on their way to Edmonton, as in October 1859.[144] Some years the Saskatchewan brigade would have a long passage, and the post's outfit would not leave Edmonton until October, as in autumn 1854, when a 43-horse train started from Edmonton on October 7.[145] Horses would have to be present at Fort Assiniboine to transport the returns to Edmonton

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in the spring; when there were not enough there, some would be taken there from Edmonton. This was the case in May, 1857.[146] Boats were supplied at Fort Assiniboine for transport to Lesser Slave Lake, as per the council's resolution cited on the previous page. The other aspect of the supply function of the relationship between the two posts was the shipment of sundries. During Outfit 1826, for example, Fort Assiniboine supplied £11 5s. 10d. worth of gum, buffalo robes, and grease to Lesser Slave Lake. During Outfit 1832, Fort Assiniboine received £2 19s. 4d. worth of bottom bark in September from Lesser Slave Lake.[147] The transport of these materials quite possibly extended over the entire year, and thus communication existed between the two posts at other times than spring and fall. This is attested to by George McDougall's journey to his post from Edmonton via Fort Assiniboine in February, 1842.[148] Lesser Slave Lake, in any case, would have sent and received its quota of the winter express to York Factory through Fort Assiniboine and Edmonton. Fort Assiniboine had one other function in regard to the other post; it serviced Lesser Slave Lake's customers when the latter was closed. In the winter of 1828-29, for example, men from Fort Assiniboine were sent to the Lesser Slave Lake area to service the people there, and some freemen of that area came to the post with rats, beaver, lynx, and foxes.[149] This did not occur frequently; Lesser Slave Lake was open during most of this period[150] and, as has been discussed already, Lesser Slave Lake seems to have eclipsed its sister post in terms of value as a trading center.[151] The impact of the trail and Fort Assiniboine's new role as a way station was to tie Lesser Slave Lake securely to Edmonton and the Saskatchewan District; in 1826 the old Lesser Slave Lake District was dissolved and the post was made part of the Saskatchewan District.[152]

The Hudson's Bay Company post at Lac Ste. Anne was established in 1857, and its first outfit was sent to it over the trail that autumn. The trail to Lac Ste. Anne branched off to the north and west some miles north of St. Albert, to which place the trail undoubtedly also saw goods in shipment from Edmonton. The post at Lac Ste. Anne was open during the rest of this period, save for the summers of 1858 and 1859.[153]

The relationship of Fort Assiniboine with Jasper House closely resembled that with Lesser Slave Lake. The outfits and returns of the post, after the trail was cut in the winter of 1824-25, passed through Fort Assiniboine on their way to and from Edmonton, as did the winter express to and from York Factory. Fort Assiniboine was also a supply point for Jasper House. This relationship applied, with certain modifications being made, to the whole period, save for the years when the post was closed.[154] As in the case of Lesser Slave Lake, the outfits for the post and returns thereof were brought from and sent to Edmonton via Fort Assiniboine, the Athabasca

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River being the highway between it and Jasper House. This aspect of the relationship between them is documented well in the Edmonton journals. The outfit of 1827, for example, left Edmonton under the charge of Michel Klyne, the manager of Jasper House, on 19 horses on September 12; returns of that outfit arrived at Edmonton on May 16, 1828.[155] Sometimes the returns were brought in in company with those of Fort Assiniboine, as was the case in May, 1829.[156] Occasionally the Saskatchewan brigade would make a longer than usual passage from York Factory, and the outfit would not get under way until October, as was the case in the autumn of 1854.[157] The men who were in charge during the summer travelled over this route as well. The example here is H.J. Moberly, who in the summer of 1855 covered the 80 miles to Fort Assiniboine in six days and then travelled the 120 miles upstream on the Athabasca with his men and supplies to Jasper House. He returned by this route near the beginning of September, 1855.[158] In this respect the posts of Lesser Slave Lake and Jasper House were alike in their relationship with Fort Assiniboine; the routes were used for summer supplies and returns as well as those of the winter. Fort Assiniboine was also a supply and relay point for Jasper House. On January 19, 1829, some Edmonton men with supplies for Jasper House came through Fort Assiniboine, and the 1836-37 accounts for the latter reveal that sundries were supplied to Jasper House.[159] Moreover, the York Factory winter express would have been sent through Fort Assiniboine to Jasper House; thus communication between the two points was year-round.

1858 was, on the whole, an important year for the relationship between Jasper House and Fort Assiniboine. During the early autumn of 1858, it had been decided that Jasper House was to be abandoned, and the Jasper House band of Iroquois, descendants of old North West Company canoemen, came to Fort Assiniboine to trade. Thus the post served, as it had done for Lesser Slave Lake, the customers of Jasper House when the last-mentioned post was not in operation. It was during 1858 as well that a new domestic supply route was established within the Saskatchewan District. H.J. Moberly reopened Jasper House during the winter of 1858, but did not go there via Fort Assiniboine. He went across country from Edmonton and established a trail. The returns for that year came out, however, via Fort Assiniboine.[160] The outfit of 1859 for the post travelled overland by this trail, as did the staff for the summer of 1860. The returns, in the spring of 1860, came out via Fort assiniboine.[161] Perhaps, therefore, the new overland route was used in summer and fall, while the old route remained for bringing out returns.

There is one final aspect to be discussed in the relationship of Fort Assiniboine with Jasper House. Jasper House, as the point of departure and reception for travellers through the Athabasca and Leather (Yellowhead) Passes, was in the middle of the route between Fort Assiniboine and the districts of Columbia and New Caledonia.

Fort Assiniboine was the point of connection of the route up the Athabasca River to the Rocky Mountains with the route from York Factory to Edmonton via the Nelson River, Lake Winnipeg, and the Saskatchewan River. Over this route passed the express of the Columbia and New Caledonia Districts, in addition to supplies and personnel destined for and coming from these districts. Furs and leather as well were sent over the mountains by this route, the furs to the mouth of the Columbia and later Victoria and the leather to New Caledonia. This was the nature of the relationship between Fort Assiniboine and the Company's Pacific coast territories. The outfits for the two districts did not, however, as far as is known, go by the Fort Assiniboine route. When Simpson was making the arrangements for the trail at the post in 1824, he mentioned the Columbia express, not the Columbia outfit.[162] (New Caledonia at the time was a part of the Columbia District). The Columbia District's outfits and returns were conveyed to and from the mouth of the Columbia by sea;[163] this arrangement had begun with the "Isaac Todd" in 1819.[164] The barque "Columbia" became the supply ship in 1835.[165] The New Caledonia returns of Outfit 1826 and the outfits from 1827 on were transported through Fort Vancouver, and by the ship to or from England;[166] previously they had been shipped to and from York Factory via Fort Chipewyan and the Peace River.[167] Thus Fort Assiniboine saw express, personnel, and supplies passing through it to or from the region west of the mountains, and leather and furs coming from Edmonton on horses and being embarked in boats for Jasper House and eventually the Columbia and Victoria, and New Caledonia.

The express was sent from York Factory via Edmonton, Fort Assiniboine and the Athabasca Pass to the Columbia, including New Caledonia, every autumn. It travelled the reverse route each spring. By this arrangement dispatches from London could be sent to Fort Vancouver from York Factory in three to four months.[168] Thus the route of the express to the Athabasca River was changed by the advent of the trail. Before Outfit 1825, and possibly in the spring of 1825, the express reached the Athabasca River by the Nelson River from York Factory to Norway House and the Saskatchewan to Cumberland, from which point it portaged north to join the Churchill River and went through this system, by the Beaver River and Portage La Biche to the Athabasca. The reverse was true in the spring. Thus the express had travelled through Fort Assiniboine before 1825, as discussed in the case of Peter Skene Ogden in the fall of 1823.[169] The post did not become a transcontinental way station, however, until the advent of the trail in 1824-25. The first recorded use of the new route by the express which I have been able to discover was in the autumn of 1825 during that outfit.[170] It may have been used during the spring of 1825 by the Columbia express sent to York Factory, but there is no recorded evidence of such an event. The express for the Columbia and New Caledonia districts continued to travel this route for nearly 30 years, the last known instances of this being in the autumn and spring of Outfit 1853.[171] The minutes of the Council of the Northern Department specifically ordered the spring express through Edmonton from spring 1826 up to Outfit 1829 inclusive.[172] Thereafter the spring express was not mentioned specifically, but nevertheless still operated, as shown by certain of the following examples.

There are numerous examples of the movements of the express being mentioned in the post journals of Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine. In Outfit 1825, for example, the Columbia express party left Edmonton September 23; the spring express, after having horses sent to Fort Assiniboine, arrived at Edmonton May 17, 1826.[173] Fort Assiniboine, as the departure point for the mountains, was also a provisioning point; after their six-day journey in autumn 1828 from Edmonton, the Columbia party under Dease (probably John Warren Dease, in charge of the Fort Colvile district[174]) and J.E. Harriott departed, taking six bags of pemmican from Fort Assiniboine and eight bags sent from Edmonton.[175] Fort Assiniboine's role as a craft-to-horse transport point is beautifully illustrated by the May 12, 1831 entry in the Fort Assiniboine post journal noting the arrival of the two canoes of the Columbia express party.[176] They would then, of course, have proceeded on horseback to Edmonton. Travellers' accounts also provide mention of the express. On May 6, 1846, Father Jean De Smet, a missionary on his way over the mountains to Oregon, met the spring express coming eastward under Francis Ermatinger.[177] The movements of the express in the 1850's are documented in the letters of Eden Colvile, Assistant Governor of Rupert's Land, to Simpson, Sir J.H. Pelly, and others. Colvile mentioned the progress of the express in the autumn of 1851 in a letter to Simpson from Lower Fort Garry written in January, 1852. He noted, on the basis of information from Edmonton, that the Columbia party was late due to the long passage of the Saskatchewan brigade and the fact that the trail was obstructed with deadfall and in very bad shape.[178] Thus the Columbia party probably arrived late at Fort Assiniboine, possibly in October rather than in September. This letter also reveals the continual problems with the trail experienced by all the traffic passing over it. Although it might seem from the previous statements that communication between the western slopes and Fort Assiniboine was limited to spring and fall, this was not true. There was contact at other times of the year. On Christmas Day, 1828, for example, Baptiste Berland and

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Jacques Cardinal arrived at Fort Assiniboine from Jasper House with some Columbia dispatches.[179]

In addition to mail, personnel and their families passed between the lower Columbia and New Caledonia and Edmonton and York Factory through Fort Assiniboine. A number of persons travelled with the express every year, particularly in the fall. The autumn express became a vehicle for the transport of employees to the west side of the mountains. They helped to crew the Saskatchewan brigade to Edmonton and then proceeded to Fort Assiniboine, boarded boats for Jasper House, and proceeded on over the Athabasca Pass to Boat Encampment on the Columbia and down to Fort Vancouver. Men destined for New Caledonia would separate from the others and go through the Yellowhead or Leather pass to the posts of the New Caledonia District, when they did not follow some other route there. These arrangements are noted in the minutes of the Council of the Northern Department for Outfits 1825-1853 inclusive.[180] The minutes reveal, first of all, that men were sent to the Columbia District through Edmonton each year throughout this period,[181] as exemplified by this resolution of 1842:

> 64. That Alexander Anderson, Clerk, and William Todd, Apprentice P.M. with 20 servants be forwarded to the Columbia District, and accompany the Saskatchewan Brigade under the charge of C.T. Harriott to Edmonton, from thence proceed under the charge of Mr. Anderson to Vancouver, unless he may receive further instructions from C.F. McLoughlin en route, by which he will regulate his movements.[182]

Sometimes, as in 1830, additional men for this district were also forwarded from York Factory via Fort Chipewyan, the Peace River, and New Caledonia.[183] This was one of the routes followed by New Caledonia men when not proceeding through Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine; the other was by sea to Fort Vancouver and thence through the interior to these posts. These routes were used by the New Caledonia servants, to the exclusion of the other, during Outfits 1825, 1830-1833, and 1835; and possibly during Outfits 1834, 1838, and 1844-1848.[184] During the remainder of the period (1826-1853), except for the years noted above, New Caledonia staff travelled to their posts each fall via the Saskatchewan River, Edmonton, and Fort Assiniboine; sometimes one of the other routes would be used as well.[185] Men came out via Fort Assiniboine and Edmonton in the fall and spring as well to York Factory. Finan McDonald was to cross the mountains to the east for retirement in the autumn of 1826, and John McDonell and George McDougall were given the same instructions for the spring of 1830.[186] The Fort Assiniboine post journal entry of May 12, 1831 noted the arrival in two canoes from the Columbia of Chief Trader Alexander R. MacLeod and Messrs. Burnsten, Douglas, and Pambrun, and their families.[187] Families were often taken with the express and personnel party. The number of men shipped by this route varied; in 1826 there were 25; in 1829, 42; in 1848, 23.[188] Thus there were Columbia personnel

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travelling through Fort Assiniboine each year, in the spring and fall, during Outfits 1825-1853. New Caledonia personnel also sometimes travelled this way. Thus, with the Jasper House and Lesser Slave Lake men taken into account, a substantial number of people passed through the fort during these seasons.

After 1853 the number of men transported through Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine dropped drastically, for reasons which will be discussed shortly. 1853 was the last outfit during which men were given the regular orders by the Council of the Northern Department to be sent to the Western and Oregon Departments (new names for the New Caledonia and Columbia Districts). Thereafter the only mention in the minutes of Council of sending men to the Pacific coast area from York Factory through Fort Assiniboine consisted of orders in Outfits 1857-1860 that six servants were to proceed to New Caledonia via the Saskatchewan River. In 1857 they were to proceed to Jasper House and through the Yellowhead Pass; in the three other years they were to go via Saskatchewan to Peace River (probably Dunvegan) and winter there, and then proceed to New Caledonia in the spring.[189] This last regular movement of employees in 1853 also marks the last time that the express was sent through Edmonton, Fort Assiniboine, and the Athabasca Pass. Two other instances of personnel movement are recorded. During the summer of 1855 a man went to Jasper House who had brought a packet, probably mail, from Fort Victoria to Edmonton during the previous winter and who wanted to catch the boat back to the coast the ensuing spring.[190] This is proof that neither regular express nor personnel were going through to Victoria that year; if they had been, this man would not have had to return to the coast in the "spring boat", which must have been one of those which carried the returns of the Western Department out to Victoria in the spring. The second instance is Moberly's transport of sixteen men, destined for the Western Department, to that place via Fort Assiniboine, Lesser Slave Lake, and Peace River in the fall of 1856.[191] Thus it can be seen that the regular method of transportation of personnel, and also the express, came to an end with Outfit 1853; during the years afterward, to 1860, there were some men transported, but the transcontinental function of Fort Assiniboine was coming to an end.

Supplies were also shipped over the trail between Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine for the Company's territories west of the mountains. Provisions were often a cargo, as was personnel, carried with the express in the autumn. In 1839, for example, Dr. John McLoughlin, with express and personnel, left Edmonton August 30 in company with the brigades for Jasper House and Fort Assiniboine, the pack train numbering 120 horses. His party embarked at Fort Assiniboine in five boats and one North canoe, carrying about 70 pieces of provisions.[192] The shipment of

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provisions and trade goods through Fort Assiniboine in this regard is well documented in the post's accounts. In Outfit 1826, for example, blankets, highland garters, and cloth shirts to the value of £14 14s. 6d. which had been shipped there from the Columbia Depot were used as part of the post's outfit. During September, October, and November of the same year £90 9s. 2d. worth of such sundries as gunpowder, moose skins, copper kettles, canoes, rum, pounded meat, and grease were shipped to the Columbia and New Caledonia, 35 horses being used for this. £11 5s. 2d. worth of sundries were shipped thus in Outfit 1832. The reciprocal nature of this arrangement is again shown by the entry that £6 6s. worth of grease, meat, gum, pemmican, and bark was supplied by the Columbia District to Fort Assiniboine in May and August of 1837.[193] A considerable amount of trade goods was shipped from the Columbia to Fort Assiniboine during the 1820's. In 1826 this stock was ordered to be taken by the Saskatchewan District as part of Outfit 1827 and any remainder brought out to Cumberland and Norway House in the spring of 1827.[194] The practice of shipment of goods from Saskatchewan to the western slopes was still in existence in Outfit 1856, when H.J. Moberly took buffalo grease to the Western Department from Edmonton via Fort Assiniboine, Lesser Slave Lake, and Peace River.[195]

The role of the Saskatchewan District in supplying leather for the trade has already been discussed, in regard

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to Fort Assiniboine's participation in the efforts to gather this product.[196] Part of the quotas of leather required from the Saskatchewan District were destined for New Caledonia, and were ordered to be shipped through Fort Assiniboine. This was the case during the following outfits: 1825-1828, 1834-1839, 1848-1853.[197] During these years the leather (including pack cords, babiche, sinews, etc.) went from Fort Assiniboine to Jasper House, usually in company with the express, personnel, etc. travelling to the Columbia and New Caledonia. The New Caledonia men, leather, provisions, etc. went, not through the Athabasca Pass, but through the Leather, or Yellowhead Pass to Tête Jaune Cache and then on to their posts. This route was surveyed in the autumn of 1825 by Chief Trader James McMillan, in charge of Fort Assiniboine. He surveyed the track through this pass from Jasper House to the head of the Fraser River,[198] and the new route was henceforth used by the New Caledonians during the years noted above. Sometimes, the leather was not taken all the way to New Caledonia by the express party in the fall and was left at Fort Assiniboine, as in 1828.[199] It was undoubtedly transported later on during the season. The mention of transport of leather ceases in the minutes of the Council of the Northern Department after 1853;[200] the last recorded shipment of leather to New Caledonia was with H.J. Moberly in the autumn of 1856, from Edmonton via Fort Assiniboine, Lesser Slave Lake, and Peace River.[201]

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The movement of these four things - express, personnel, supplies, leather - between Fort Assiniboine and the Columbia and New Caledonia districts is well documented in Edward Ermatinger's "York Factory Express Journal" for Outfit 1827. He left York Factory with the autumn express on July 14, 1827,[202] arriving at Edmonton September 10. He departed three days later for Fort Assiniboine, reaching that place on September 18. At his departure from Edmonton, his party had six saddle and 29 pack horses.[203] Their baggage list clearly reveals that provisions, leather for New Caledonia, and the express paper trunk were being carried:

12 packs dressed leather
1 bale portage straps
5 " robes for Jasper House
1 cassette & portmanteau Dr. Todd
2 " Mr. McDougall
1 " E.E.
1 " families
1 C " (small L. Leblanc)
1 bag flour J.W. Dease
1 keg sugar "
2 " do families
2 bags flour do
½ Maccaron do
1 case G. McD.
1 tent do
1 do Dr. Todd
1 paper Trunk

½ bale Sundries - families
2 case and basket - Dr. Todd
2 barrels biscuit
1 keg sugar
1 keg tea
½ Maccaroni
mess
1 keg Beef and Pork
1 keg spirits for Drams Prov.
6 bags Pemican
2 bales Dried Meat ea. 50 lbs.
2 prs. Saddle Bags grease ea. 100 lbs.
8 bags potatoes
5 beds and sundry small parcels[204]

On his journey to Fort Assiniboine, Ermatinger mentioned points along the old trail as named by the fur traders: Grand Échaffaud, Rivière qui barre, Berland's Lake, Lac La Nonne, Jolie Prairie, Les Deux Rivières, and finally

Fort Assiniboine. At the fort canoes were repaired, and poles and paddles made.[205] The party left Fort Assiniboine in four canoes on September 20. They had picked up 16 more packs of leather for New Caledonia at Fort Assiniboine and also some other goods; these were not in the above list on departure from Edmonton. These goods consisted of: powder and shot, guns, trade goods, flour and sugar, pemmican, and tobacco.[206] The list of people in each canoe reveals that the families of McDougall, of New Caledonia, and Klyne of Jasper House, and also of A.R. McLeod and A. Ogie were transported. The crew lists of the canoes contain 31 names; these men were the balance of the Columbia and New Caledonia servants sent from York Factory that fall.[207] The trade goods were left at Jasper House, and the two parties shortly afterwards separated for the Athabasca and Yellowhead Passes. The New Caledonia party had 40 horses to carry their leather, provisions, and gentlemen and families, while the Columbia party had 15 horses to carry people and baggage, which consisted of cases, portage straps and provisions. No guns nor powder and shot are listed among the baggage, but some were certainly carried.[208] Ermatinger also took charge of the spring express of Outfit 1827; one of the passengers on that trip was a Mr. Dease, probably John W. Dease, who was picked up at Fort Colvile.[209] There were undoubtedly Chief Factors travelling with the spring and fall expresses to and from the meetings of the Council of the Northern Department every summer at Norway House or

York Factory. The purpose of the above discussion has been to show how the transmountain party carried express, personnel, supplies, and leather through Fort Assiniboine in spring and autumn during Outfits 1825-1853. There is one final cargo which deserves discussion here: fur.

In February 1839 the Hudson's Bay Company obtained a monopoly from the Russian American Company of the trade and navigation of certain of the latter's territory on the northern Pacific Coast, in return for which it was to supply provisions and seasoned land-otter skins to the Russians.[210] These otter skins came from both sides of the mountains, and those from the eastern side were collected in Rupert's Land and shipped to the Pacific coast by the Saskatchewan River through Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine. The otters were taken to Sitka in the Hudson's Bay Company steamer "Beaver." They were sent therefore to Fort Vancouver and, after 1843, to Fort Victoria.[211] This began in 1840, according to Council's resolution of 1839:

> 72. That 3000 seasoned Land Otter Skins excluding Cub, damaged and staged be provided from the East side of the Mountains to complete the Contract entered into with the Russian American Company to be taken across the Mountains commencing with 1840 in the Columbia Brigade so as to be delivered by the 1st February every year commencing with 1841 in order to obtain payment by Bills on St. Petersburgh in time to be remitted by the Spring Express.[212]

The otters were shipped in this fashion every year until 1848 inclusive.[213] In 1849 a new treaty was made with the

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Russian American Company which provided that all the treaty otters were to come from the west side of the mountains,[214] and thus no more were shipped through Fort Assiniboine.

This terminates the discussion of Fort Assiniboine's relationships with the other posts of the Saskatchewan District and of the Columbia and New Caledonia Districts (later the Oregon and Western Departments). Through this analysis one can see that the routes over the trail to the post and on to the mountains or Jasper House and Lesser Slave Lake, or the reverse, became standard routes for travel to and from these places. For this reason Fort Assiniboine played host to a number of known and also undoubtedly some unknown travellers. There were, for example, Alexander Ross, Paul Kane, and Father De Smet, who have been discussed already. Local missionaries used the route as well. Robert T. Rundle went in February 1842 to Lesser Slave Lake via Fort Assiniboine with George McDougall, the man in charge at Lesser Slave Lake, who was returning to his post. Rundle also visited Fort Assiniboine several times for the purpose of preaching the Gospel.[215] Father Albert Lacombe also passed through the post, on his way to Lesser Slave Lake in the spring of 1855.[216] Thus the use of the trail was by no means limited to fur traders or Indians travelling to the posts to trade.

Fort Assiniboine: End of the Transcontinental Function

The transcontinental function of Fort Assiniboine came to an end with the conclusion of Outfit 1860. This was the last year in which personnel are known to have been sent from York Factory to the Company's territories on the western slopes. The last known shipment of leather and provisions was in Outfit 1856, and the overland express had ceased to operate after Outfit 1853. Why did the transcontinental function of the fort end?

The answer to this question lies partly in the following statement by A.S. Morton about the Edmonton-Fort Assiniboine-Pacific route:

> The new route to the Columbia held the field until the Panama route and steamers on the Pacific put it out of use.[217]

The connection of the Pacific coast with England through Panama was the beginning of the end for the overland route. Regular monthly correspondence was had with the Committee in London via Panama beginning in 1849;[218] this is clearly illustrated in the correspondence of Eden Colvile. In a letter to Sir J.H. Pelly from Victoria in 1849, Colvile mentioned the steamer which went to Panama. From there mail crossed the isthmus to the eastern coast, was taken to Washington, or perhaps other American ports on the eastern seaboard and thence across the Atlantic to Britain.[219] Obviously this was a great improvement over the overland route. It was of course year-round, and was of a monthly nature in contrast to the overland route, which had taken three to four months to travel between York Factory and the Pacific alone.[220] However, in spite of the new mail line the old express continued to operate as usual for a few years. Although the depot for the Columbia and New Caledonia Districts was moved to Victoria in 1849 after the Oregon Crisis, the express continued through the interior of British territory to Boat Encampment and the Athabasca Pass. Beginning in 1850, the express abandoned the Columbia from Fort Vancouver and used the Hope Trail from Fort Hope on the Fraser River to arrive at the pass and then proceeded as before.[221] Eden Colvile wrote to the Governor, Deputy Governor and Committee in London from Norway House on July 21, 1852 that he had had news and accounts from the western slopes by the usual spring express.[222] Thus the Oregon Crisis and resultant shift from the Columbia River was not the reason for the end of the overland route to York Factory.

The reasons for the end of the overland route to and from York Factory were twofold; the first was the advent of the more convenient and faster mail route via Panama and the United States to England. The second was the establishment of the Western and Oregon Departments as separate entities from the Northern Department, which took effect June 1, 1853. The Oregon Department was to be dissolved once the Hudson's Bay Company's possessory rights in the American territory of Oregon had been disposed of.[223] The region west of the mountains was therefore independent of the Northern Department, and the express would not be needed to or from York Factory. In fact, receiving instructions from both London and Rupert's Land was confusing and possibly inconvenient to the trade. Colvile remarked on this exactly when he wrote to the Governor, Deputy Governor, and Committee in London on July 21, 1852 that he wholeheartedly approved of the two forthcoming new departments as he had, in sending instructions to the Board of Management (the governing body of the two departments), feared that his own instructions would contradict those sent from London and possibly upset business.[224] Colvile wrote in the same letter that no men were required from the east side of the mountains that year and that it was hoped that none would be needed from there.[225] Actual estrangement from the Northern Department would soon be completed. Thus the stage was set for the end of regular use of the overland route through Athabasca Pass. In Outfit 1853 the express and personnel went through, but no more, as far as is known, did so. Hector said in 1859 that as late as 1853 express and freight had gone over this route;[226] by 1858, however, the overland route had been abandoned. Simpson wrote to the Secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company on April 19 of that year:

> ...the overland route from the West side of the mountains having been discontinued of late years, ...[227]

Palliser, on his famous expedition, reached the Pacific

Coast by the Kootenay and not the Athabasca Pass.[228]

With the demise of regular use of the Athabasca Pass, the end of Fort Assiniboine's function as a transcontinental way station was not long in coming. As was discussed previously, a few more men and supplies were sent to the Western Department via Fort Assiniboine.[229] With the new communication and administrative developments on the Pacific Coast, it was only a short time until the last flow of men and provisions from the east side of the mountains through Fort Assiniboine was allowed to dry up. The Athabasca Pass soldiered on in two more instances: that of the man described above who went to Jasper House in 1855 to go to Victoria in the spring of 1856;[230] and that of W.L. Hardisty of the Hudson's Bay Company, who in the summer of 1858 crossed the pass to meet Chief Factor A.J. Dallas.[231] It is possible that Hardisty travelled directly overland to Jasper House on Moberly's track. Hardisty's trip is the last known one by a Hudson's Bay Company man over the Athabasca Pass.[232] Some men, provisions, and leather were also sent during Outfits 1856-1860 to New Caledonia from York Factory via Edmonton, Fort Assiniboine, and the Leather Pass or from Fort Assiniboine through Lesser Slave Lake and Peace River to their destination.[233] Thus 1860 was the last known outfit during which Fort Assiniboine served as a transcontinental fur trade way station; thereafter it continued its transport role within the Saskatchewan District and also existed as a fur trading post.

Fort Assiniboine had become, during Outfit 1824, a newly important post, rising from its previous status of a simple fur trade establishment. This importance was due rather to its new transport role than to its role as a trading post. It was a very important link between the head of travel on the Saskatchewan River, Edmonton, and the highway to the passes over the Rockies, the Athabasca River, for nearly 30 years. During the same time it was a very important link between Edmonton, the chief post of the Saskatchewan District, and some of the posts of that district. It is this double importance as a transport link, as well as possessing some importance as a fur trade post, which is the distinguishing feature of this second period, the most versatile in Fort Assiniboine's history. Toward the end of this period its importance as a transcontinental way station began to decline and finally faded, while some of its importance as a local way station declined as well. Thus it entered the third and final period of its history as a Hudson's Bay Company establishment, as a post whose main concern was local transport but which also did a small amount of trading.

Footnotes

[1] Frederick Merk, ed. *Fur Trade and Empire*: *George Simpson's Journal 1824-1825* (Cambridge, 1931) p. 22.

[2] Chapter 1, pp. 15-18.

[3] W.G.P. Allen, *The Trail Through the Pembina Valley 1790-1912* (unpublished manuscript), p. 61.

[4] J.B. Tyrrell, ed. *David Thompson's Narrative of His Explorations in Western America 1784-1812* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1916), p. lxxxii.

[5] Allen, *The Trail Through the Pembina Valley 1790-1912*, pp. 64-67, 80-81, 87, 89-98, 102-103.

[6] H.E. Rawlinson, "Chief Factor John Rowand" *Alberta Historical Review*, (Spring, 1957), p. 11.

[7] E.E. Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870*, (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1959), Vol. II., p. 441.

[8] Merk, ed. *Fur Trade and Empire*, pp. 18-20, 24.

[9] Ibid., pp. 24, 9.

[10] Ibid., p. 25.

[11] Ibid., pp. 25-27.

[12] Ibid., p. 27.

[13] Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company*, Vol. II, pp. 445-446.

[14] Merk, ed. *Fur Trade and Empire*, pp. 21-22.

[15] Ibid., p. 22.

[16] R.H. Fleming, ed. *Minutes of Council Northern Department of Rupert Land, 1821-31* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1940), p. 78.

[17] Ibid., p. 97.

[18] Ibid.

[19] W.P. Baergen, *The Fur Trade at Lesser Slave Lake 1815-1831*. Unpublished M.A. thesis University of Alberta, 1967, p. 119.

[20] Merk, ed. *Fur Trade and Empire*, pp. 148-150.

[21] Rawlinson, "Chief Factor John Rowand", pp. 11-12.

[22] Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company*, Vol. II. p. 446.

[23] Merk, ed. *Fur Trade and Empire*, p. 28.

[24] Ibid., pp. 148-149.

[25] Edmonton post journal, September 24, 1825. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/23.

[26] Fleming, ed. *Minutes of Council Northern Department*, p. 78.

[27] Baergen, *The Fur Trade at Lesser Slave Lake*, p. 116. Also Fort Assiniboine Report on District, 1824-25. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/e/1.

[28] Edmonton post journal, September 24, 1825. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/23.

[29] J.M. Parker, *The Fur Trade of Fort Chipewyan On Lake Athabasca, 1778-1835*. Unpublished M.A. thesis, 1967 p. 193.

[30] See Appendix 1 at the back of this thesis. The specific sources of this information are: E.H. Oliver, ed. *The Canadian North-West: Its Early Development and Legislative Records* (Ottawa, 1914), Vol. I, pp. 677-678. Edmonton post journal, 1832-1833. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/27. Fort Assiniboine account book, 1832-33. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/2.

[31] Chapter 1, pp. 15-16.

[32] Fleming, ed. *Minutes of Council Northern Department*, p. 109.

[33] Edmonton post journal, May 19, 1828. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/25.

[34] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1832-33. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/2.

[35] Edmonton post journal, May 10, 1833. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/27.

[36] Ibid., September, 1832.

[37] Irene M. Spry, ed. *The Papers of the Palliser Expedition, 1857-1860* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1968), p. 362.

[38] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1858. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/3.

[39] Fort Assiniboine post journals, 1828-29, 1830-31. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1-2.

[40] See Appendix 1.

[41] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1826-27. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/1.

[42] Merk, ed. Fur Trade and Empire, p. 20n.

[43] See Appendix 1.

[44] E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Vol. II, p. 729.

[45] See Appendix 1.

[46] Paul Kane, Wanderings Of An Artist Among The Indians of North America From Canada to Vancouver's Island And Oregon Through The Hudson's Bay Company's Territory And Back Again (London, 1859; reprint ed., Edmonton, 1968), p.99.

[47] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1846. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/2.

[48] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1832-33. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/2.

[49] H.J. Moberly, When Fur Was King (Toronto, 1929), p. 57.

[50] Edmonton post journal, September 24, 1825. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/23.

[51] See Appendix 1.

[52] See Appendix 1. Specific reference is E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Vol. II, p. 847.

[53] E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Vol, II, p. 846.

[54] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 169.

[55] See page 33 of this chapter.

[56] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 170.

[57] By the last two years of the period under discussion, the returns had decreased drastically. The return on Outfit 1859 was £321 3s. 6d. and that on Outfit 1860 £520 19s. 6d. The source here is Saskatchewan District Returns, Outfits 1859-1864. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/d/150.

[58] Edmonton post journal, September 24, 1825. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/23.

[59] Edmonton post journal, September 7, 1832. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/27. Also Fort Assiniboine account books, 1826-27, 1832-33, 1836-37. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/1-3.

[60] Edmonton post journal, September 7, 1854. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/29a.

[61] Edmonton post journal, September 23, 1856. Hudons's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/29b.

[62] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 109.

[63] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1854 and 1856. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/3.

[64] Edmonton post journal, September 19, 1832. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/27.

[65] Edmonton post journal, September 7, 1854. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/29a. Also, Baergen, in his The Fur Trade at Lesser Slave Lake, discusses Lesser Slave Lake returns in general.

[66] Edmonton post journal, September 23, 1856. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/29b.

[67] See Chapter 1, p. 12.

[68] See Chapter 1, pp. 17-18.

[69] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1828-29. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[70] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1830-31. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/2.

[71] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1828-29. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1. Linton received a visit on March 5, 1829, by Pembuc the Saulteaux.

[72] Ibid. There are many references to freemen in the

journal for this year, some of whom, like Jacques Cardinal, were probably of mixed blood.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1830-31. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/2.

[76] Fort Assiniboine post journals, 1828-29 and 1830-31. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1-2.

[77] Fort Assiniboine post journal, April 21, 1829. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[78] Ibid., January 29.

[79] Moberly, *When Fur Was King*, p. 56.

[80] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1828-29. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[81] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1830-31. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/2.

[82] Paul Kane, *Wanderings Of An Artist*, pp. 251-254.

[83] Fort Assiniboine post journals, 1828-29 and 1830-31. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1-2. Also Fort Assiniboine account books, 1826-27, 1832-33, and 1836-37. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/1-3.

[84] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1828-29. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[85] Ibid., December 25, January 7-19, 23. Also Fort Assiniboine post journal, December 25, 1830. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/2.

[86] Moberly, *When Fur Was King*, p. 63.

[87] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1828-29. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1830-31. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/2.

[90] Laurence J. Burpee, *On The Old Athabaska Trail* (Toronto, 1926), p. 124.

[91] Spry, ed. The Palliser Papers, p. 362. Also Fort Assiniboine post journals, 1828-29 and 1830-31. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1-2. The journals reveal that little, if any, animosity existed between the Company men and the natives.

[92] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1828-29. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[93] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, pp. 170, 201, 216, 247. Also E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Vols. I-II, pp. 654, 669, 687, 831-832, 866.

[94] A.S. Morton, A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71 2nd ed., edited by L.G. Thomas (Toronto, 1973). pp. 696-698.

[95] E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Vol. II, p. 813.

[96] Ibid., p. 704. Also Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, 229. Also, Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1834, 1845, 1846. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/2.

[97] E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Vol. II, pp. 772, 834.

[98] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, pp. 109, 144, 167, 187, 212. Also E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Vols. I-II, pp. 654, 669, 704 720, 729, 737, 768. Also Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1834, 1844-1860. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/2-3.

[99] See Appendix 2.

[100] Fort Assiniboine post journal, March 16, 1829. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[101] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, pp. 78, 197, 247. Also E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Vols. I-II, pp. 654, 694, 713, 729, 762, 778, 802, 819, 870-871. Also Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1834, 1844-1860. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/2-3.

[102] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 90. Also E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Vol. II, p. 851.

[103] E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Vol.

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II, pp. 755, 834.

[104] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, pp. 127, 130.

[105] Ibid., p. 118.

[106] Ibid., pp. 115-116.

[107] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1845, Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/2.

[108] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, pp. 94-96, 190, 220, 223-24.

[109] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1828-29. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[110] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1830-31. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/2.

[111] Ibid., November 4, 8, 18: December 5, February 13.

[112] Ibid., December 13.

[113] Spry, ed. The Palliser Papers, p. 362.

[114] Ibid.

[115] Fort Assiniboine post journal, April 21, 1829. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[116] H.J. Moberly, When Fur Was King, p. 51

[117] See Chapter 2, p. 28.

[118] Edmonton post journals, 1825-26 and 1826-27. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/23-24.

[119] Edmonton post journal, 1832-33. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/27.

[120] Edmonton post journal, 1854-55. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/29a.

[121] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1832-33. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/2.

[122] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1828-29. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[123] Edmonton post journal, 1856-57. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/29b. Also post journal 1859-60.

Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/30.

[124] Edmonton post journal, 1825-26. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/23.

[125] Edmonton post journal, 1828-29. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/26.

[126] Edmonton post journal, 1854-55. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/29a.

[127] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1832-33. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/2.

[128] Fort Assiniboine account books, 1826-27 and 1832-33. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/1-2.

[129] See Chapter 2, pp. 51-52.

[130] Ibid., pp. 36-38.

[131] Edmonton post journal, 1855-56. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/29b.

[132] Edmonton post journal, September 23, 1825. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/23.

[133] Morton, A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71, p. 700.

[134] Fort Assiniboine post journals, 1828-29 and 1830-31. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1-2.

[135] Edmonton post journal, 1825-26. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/23.

[136] Edmonton post journals, 1825-29, 1832-1834, 1854-1860. B. 60/a/23-31. Also Fort Assiniboine post journals, 1828-29, 1830-31. B. 8/a/1-2.

[137] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, pp. 109, 127, 181, 207, 238. Also E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Vols. I-II, pp. 646, 661, 677-678, 694, 714, 730. Also Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1834. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/2.

[138] Edmonton post journal, 1854-55. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/29a.

[139] Fort Assiniboine post journal, February 7-9, 1831. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/2.

[140] According to the Minutes of the Council of the Northern Department, Lesser Slave Lake was closed during

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the following Outfits: 1827, except the summer; 1828; and the summers of Outfits 1829-1834 and 1847. Sources here are: Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, pp. 180, 207, 237. E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Vols. I-II, pp. 646, 661, 678, 694. Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1846. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/2.

[141] Baergen, The Fur Trade at Lesser Slave Lake 1815-1831, pp. 172-173.

[142] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, pp. 107-108.

[143] Edmonton post journal, 1825-26. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/23.

[144] Edmonton post journal, 1859-60. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/30.

[145] Edmonton post journal, 1854-55. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/29a.

[146] Edmonton post journal, May 3, 1857. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/29b.

[147] Fort Assiniboine account books, 1826-27 and 1832-33. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/1-2.

[148] J.G. MacGregor, A History of Alberta (Edmonton, 1972), pp. 68-69.

[149] Fort Assiniboine post journal, November 27 and December 13, 1828. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[150] See Chapter 2, note 140.

[151] See Chapter 2, p. 44.

[152] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 147. Lesser Slave Lake is included in this district in the minutes of Council 1826.

[153] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1857-1860. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/3.

[154] Jasper House was closed during the following Outfits: 1857, except the summer; and the summers of Outfits 1837, 1846, 1847 and 1858. Sources: E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Vol. II, p. 729. Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1845, 1846, 1857. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/2-3.

[155] Edmonton post journal, 1827-28. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/25.

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156 Edmonton post journal, 1828-29. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/26.

157 Edmonton post journal, 1854-55. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/29a.

158 H.J. Moberly, When Fur Was King, pp. 30, 51-54.

159 Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1828-29. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1. Also Fort Assiniboine account book, 1836-37. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/3.

160 H.J. Moberly, When Fur Was King, pp. 94-98. A similar route had been used prior to 1858 by Father Albert Lacombe. In 1856 this Oblate missionary travelled across country to Jasper House from Lac Ste. Anne to minister to the Catholic Iroquois metis who lived in the locality of the former place. See Memoirs of Father Lacombe, Oblate Archives Collection, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Accession 71.220. Translated manuscript copy, pp. 119-123.

161 Moberly, When Fur Was King, pp. 103-108.

162 Merk, ed. Fur Trade and Empire, pp. 25-26.

163 Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, Vol. II, pp. 445-446.

164 Eric Morse, Fur Trade Canoe Routes of Canada/Then and Now (Ottawa, 1969), p. 108.

165 Margaret Ormsby, British Columbia: A History (Vancouver, 1958), p. 69.

166 Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 144.

167 Eric Morse, Fur Trade Canoe Routes of Canada, pp. 105-108.

168 C.O. Ermatinger and J. White, ed. "York Factory Express Journal" (Transactions and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada, Series 3, Vol. VI, 1912), pp. 93-112.

169 See Chapter 1, p. 18.

170 Edmonton post journal, 1825-26. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/23.

171 Spry, ed. The Palliser Papers, pp. 370-371.

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[172] Fleming, ed. *Minutes of Council Northern Department*, pp. 154, 187, 213-214, 245.

[173] Edmonton post journal, 1825-26. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/23.

[174] Fleming, ed. *Minutes of Council Northern Department*, pp. 434-435.

[175] Fort Assiniboine post journal, September 6-7, 1828. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[176] Fort Assiniboine post journal, May 12, 1831. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/2.

[177] H.M. Chittenden and A.T. Richardson, ed. *Life, Letters and Travels of Father De Smet 1801-1873*. Vol. II. (New York, 1905, reprint ed., New York, 1969), p. 541.

[178] E.E. Rich, ed. *Eden Colvile's Letters 1849-1852* (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1956), p. 256.

[179] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1828-29. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[180] Fleming, ed. *Minutes of Council Northern Department*, pp. 105, 115, 153, 185-186, 212, 244, 263, 282. Also E.H. Oliver, ed. *The Canadian North-West*, Vols. I-II, pp. 651, 666, 684-685, 694, 701-702, 713, 720, 729, 736, 762, 767-768, 778, 785, 809, 819, 825, 840, 846, 855. Also Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1834, 1844-60. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/2-3.

[181] Fleming, ed. *Minutes of Council Northern Department*, pp. 115, 153, 185-186, 212, 244. Also E.H. Oliver, ed. *The Canadian North-West*, Vols. I-II, pp. 651, 666, 684, 694, 701, 713, 720, 729, 736, 762, 767, 778, 785, 809, 819, 825, 840, 846, 855. Also Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1834, 1844-1860. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/2-3. There are no minutes extant for Outfit 1838. My assertion that men for the Columbia passed through Edmonton during that year is therefore an assumption that such was the case based on the truth of this during the rest of the period 1825-1853.

[182] E.H. Oliver, ed. *The Canadian North-West*, Vol. II, p. 846.

[183] Fleming, ed. *Minutes of Council Northern Department*, p. 263.

[184] Ibid., pp. 105, 263, 282. Also E.H. Oliver, ed. *The Canadian North-West*, Vols. I-II, pp. 685, 702. Also

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Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1834, 1844-1848. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/2.

[185] See note 180.

[186] Fleming, ed. *Minutes of Council Northern Department*, pp. 115, 245.

[187] Fort Assiniboine post journal, May 12, 1831. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/2.

[188] Fleming, ed. *Minutes of Council Northern Department*, pp. 153, 244. Also Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1848. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/2.

[189] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1853-1860. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/3.

[190] H.J. Moberly, *When Fur Was King*, p. 60.

[191] Ibid., p. 76.

[192] John Rowand Sr., "A Letter from Fort Edmonton", (*Alberta Historical Review*, Winter 1963), pp. 1-2.

[193] Fort Assiniboine account books, 1826-27, 1832-33, 1836-37. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/1-3.

[194] Fleming, ed. *Minutes of Council Northern Department*, p. 168.

[195] Moberly, *When Fur Was King*, p. 70.

[196] See Chapter 2, pp. 51-52.

[197] Fleming, ed. *Minutes of Council Northern Department*, pp. 106, 144, 213, 234. Also E.H. Oliver, ed. *The Canadian North-West*, Vol. II, pp. 714, 729, 762, 776, 787, 800, 810. Also Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1834, 1848-1853. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/2-3. No minutes are available for 1838; it is probable that leather did go this way during that outfit.

[198] Fleming, ed. *Minutes of Council Northern Department*, p. 450.

[199] Fort Assiniboine post journal, October 6, 1828. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/a/1.

[200] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1854-1870. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/3.

[201] Moberly, *When Fur Was King*, p. 70.

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[202] Ermatinger and White, ed. "York Factory Express Journal", p. 93.

[203] Ibid., p. 103.

[204] Ibid.

[205] Ibid., p. 104.

[206] Ibid., pp. 104-5.

[207] Ibid., pp. 106-109.

[208] Ibid., p. 109.

[209] Ibid., p. 120.

[210] E.E. Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, Vol. II, pp. 644-655.

[211] Morton, A History of the Canadian West, pp. 727, 730.

[212] E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West, Vol. II, p. 786.

[213] Ibid., Vol.II, pp. 810, 826, 846, 863. Also Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1844-1848. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/2.

[214] Rich, ed. Eden Colvile's Letters, p. 144.

[215] MacGregor, A History of Alberta, p. 68. Also Journal of Robert T. Rundle, 1841-46. (unpublished manuscript). Historic Sites Branch, Department of Culture, Province of Alberta.

[216] Memoirs of Father Albert Lacombe, pp. 115-116. Also P.E. Breton O.M.I., Le Grand Chef Des Prairies (Edmonton, 1954), pp. 8-9.

[217] A.S. Morton, Sir George Simpson (Toronto, 1944), p. 130.

[218] Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, Vol. II, pp. 779-780.

[219] Rich, ed. Eden Colvile's Letters, p. 8.

[220] Ermatinger and White, ed. "York Factory Express Journal", pp. 93-112.

[221] Ormsby, British Columbia: A History, p. 93.

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222 Rich, ed. Eden Colvile's Letters, p. 135.

223 Ibid., pp. 137-138.

224 Ibid.

225 Ibid., pp. 141-142.

226 Spry, ed. The Palliser Papers, p. 370.

227 Ibid., p. lxxxiii.

228 Morton, A History of the Canadian West To 1870-71, p. 833.

229 See Chapter 2, pp. 71-74.

230 Ibid.

231 L.J. Burpee, On The Old Athabaska Trail, pp. 197-198, 256.

232 Ibid.

233 See Chapter 2, pp. 71-74.

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Chapter 3

Fort Assiniboine 1861-1877: Local Way Station

After the year 1860-61, Fort Assiniboine lost its transcontinental transport role, as detailed in the last chapter, and reverted to a position of local significance within the Saskatchewan District as a fur trade post and way station. As in the previous period the post's importance was due more to its transport function than to its value as a fur trade establishment. Fort Assiniboine continued under these conditions for another 15 years at which time new transport arrangements linking Edmonton with the Athabasca River affected the Hudson's Bay Company's abandonment of the post.

Fort Assiniboine's importance as a fur post continued to be fairly small, as in previous years. This condition is indicated, once again, by the ranks of its managers. They were low, never going higher than clerk, and were usually below that. Olivier Belrose, Interpreter, was in charge during the winter of 1861-62, while John McAulay, a clerk, took over for the summer of 1862.[1] McAulay's successor was William Calder, who was of a low rank (postmaster) as well in the Company's service. He began his term as manager of Fort Assiniboine in the fall of 1862; Calder continued in this position, winter and summer, until Outfit 1872 inclusive,[2] when he was, according to Horetzky, anxious to leave the place.[3] Calder was therefore the longest-serving manager of Fort Assiniboine,

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having served ten full years in that position; the longest any other man had been in charge of the post was five years, in the case of John Rowand, Jr.[4] During the summer of 1873 and the winter of 1873-74 a Mr. Gordon seems to have been in charge of the fort.[5] The last known manager of Fort Assiniboine was Antoine Renney in Outfit 1874, an interpreter.[6] The identity of the manager for Outfits 1875 and 1876 is unknown. These are the last two years in which the post was included by the Council of the Northern Department in its deliberations, and in both cases the post was to have had the services of an interpreter during the winter, with Chief Factor Hardisty deciding the summer arrangements for the Edmonton District. Francis Whiteford, an interpreter who had been in charge at Pigeon Lake during Outfit 1874, was listed as disposable within the Edmonton District during these two outfits; he may have been the last man in charge of Fort Assiniboine.[7]

Thus it can be seen that the ranks of the post's managers were relatively low; interpreters, clerk, and postmaster. As was the case with the previous period, this reflects its small importance as a fur trade establishment. The available references to returns support this assumption. On May 14-15, 1866, the returns from Jasper House and Fort Assiniboine, totalling 31 packs, and those from Lesser Slave Lake, totalling 36 packs, arrived at Edmonton.[8] Although the exact number of fur packs from Fort Assiniboine is impossible to discern, it is obvious that they were less,

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and probably much less, in number than those of Lesser Slave Lake. These figures, in addition to supporting the thesis that Fort Assiniboine was of a lesser importance as a fur trade establishment, also show that the ascendancy of Lesser Slave Lake post over the former continued from the previous period.[9] These two arguments are also supported by the outfit return and supply figures which span the period covered in this chapter, listed in Appendices 3 and 4. The post consistently earned some of the lowest returns and required some of the lowest amounts of supplies of any post in the Saskatchewan (later Edmonton) District. Fort Assiniboine's prime function was transport, not bringing in furs.

The staff during this last period of the post's history was small, as far as can be determined. There were few or no men at the establishment besides the manager. There were, at times, employees besides the manager serving at the post; a few references to such servants exist in the Edmonton post journals. A man arrived with Calder from the post for provisions in July 1868, and Calder left Edmonton with two men and his outfit in September of that year.[10] Calder and James Richards started for Fort Assiniboine on June 17, 1870, for the summer season.[11] Whether or not this man was an employee at the post is not certain. Although it is possible that men besides the manager served at the post in other years, it is also possible that for much of this period there was only one man, the manager,

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at the post. This was the state of affairs when Horetzky described Fort Assiniboine's staff in the autumn of 1872: "We found one solitary clerk, who, with two or three Indians, were the only inhabitants of the place."[12] The several Indians Horetzky found may have been fort hunters, but they might also have merely been natives who lived, hunted, and trapped in the neighbourhood of the post. It will be remembered from the last chapter that although the Council of the Northern Department often detailed only one or two men besides the manager to serve at Fort Assiniboine during that period, post journals, account books, etc. revealed that in practice more men were sometimes employed at the post.[13] This same condition might also have prevailed during the period under discussion in this chapter, but it is likely that such was not the case. During these years the post had no known transcontinental role in transport and its local transport role was severely limited due to the direct route from Edmonton to Jasper House, which will be discussed in due course. There was a definite decrease in traffic through Fort Assiniboine and therefore a corresponding decrease in the number of men needed for the post seems quite likely.

In addition to these domestic aspects of Fort Assiniboine's history during this period, there are several others to discuss, the first being construction and layout of the place. No more detailed information is available about the post's architectural history during

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this period than during the last.[14] The post remained a small group of huts, perhaps retaining during this period the palisade mentioned earlier by Hector.[15] Charles Horetzky described the post as follows in 1872: "The so-called 'Fort' is a mere collection of ruinous old log buildings. . . ."[16] Horetzky felt that the post was in decline and that in the main the place seemed rather inhospitable:

> Fort Assiniboine was, doubtless in the good old days of the monopoly, a snug enough little spot; but it has been allowed to fall into decay. It is very nicely situated upon a fine level terrace about twenty-seven feet above the river. In the rear, the land rises to a considerable height, and is everywhere covered with thick forest; but the aspect was bleak and desolate in the extreme, and we felt glad that our stay here was to be of the shortest. In the course of the afternoon we made a tour of inspection, accompanied by Mr. Calder, who was heartily sick of the place, and intended leaving at the first opportunity.[17]

It would appear that Calder kept a cow, in addition to the horses used for transport on the trail to Edmonton; Horetzky mentions that his party was furnished with "a few pounds of excellent butter."[18] W.S. Gore, unfortunately, mentioned nothing about the post's architectural characteristics in his notebook when he visited the post and surveyed the H.B.C. reserve there in 1873.[19] The small size of the post and of the rest of the establishment at Fort Assiniboine is shown by the report of the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company dated June 28,

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1872. This report contains a list of the reserves at each of the Company's posts, exclusive of the reserve of fertile land which was shortly after laid out in accordance with the surrender agreement with Canada. The Fort Assiniboine reserve comprised 50 acres; no other post in the Saskatchewan District had such a small acreage except Old White Mud Fort, which also had 50 acres. Edmonton and Victoria, for example, each had 3,000 acres, while Rocky Mountain House, Lesser Slave Lake, Lac Ste. Anne, and Lac La Nonne had 500 acres, and Pigeon Lake had 100 acres.[20] These figures are indicative of the small size of Fort Assiniboine in relation to other posts of the Saskatchewan District.

Provisioning of the post was just as difficult during these years as it had been during the previous ones. Very little information is available on this condition, but the truth of its existence is attested to by Horetzky, who remarked on the absolute scarcity of provisions at the post, save for Calder's butter, on his arrival in 1872.[21] Provisions were obtained from Edmonton; Calder and one man arrived there for the purpose of obtaining supplies of food in July 1868.[22] A rather grim view of Fort Assiniboine's provisioning problem appears in the following extract from the Edmonton post journal dated December 29, 1871:

> Mr. Calder & 2 men arrived from Fort Assiniboine today, coming for assistance in provisions, their

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> fisheries failed and Indians have given in no provisions, as they are starving themselves, and complain of the poverty of their lands in Fur Bearing Animals & no moose. . . .[23]

The trail continued during this period to be a source of trouble through its being obstructed with fallen timber and generally in bad condition. In the Edmonton Report on District 1862 the bad state of the road was noted.[24] Horetzky found sections of the trail nearly impassable, especially for carts.[25] The terrible state of the road was also noted by Chief Factor Richard Hardisty, in charge of the Edmonton District, in his report of June 8, 1875, to Chief Commissioner James A. Grahame at Fort Garry. He described the road as so bad that freighters would not try to use it; its impassability was a result of heavy rains and deep snow during the preceding summer and winter.[26] Time was undoubtedly spent by the post staff in attending to the trail.

One last aspect of Fort Assiniboine's domestic history during the period remains to be discussed; how it was influenced by general Northern Department measures for the department and for the Saskatchewan District. During Outfits 1861-1868, leather was to be gathered throughout the Northern Department for the use of the Southern Department, and during Outfits 1864-1865, 1867-1870 provisions, horses, stock, and crops were to be raised throughout the Northern Department.[27] It is possible that the post participated in these activities. Trading would

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have been affected by Council's resolutions that the hunting of cub bear be discouraged (Outfits 1861-1862), that the hunting of cub and small beaver be discouraged (Outfits 1862-1863), and by procedural regulations passed in regard to the trade of cub beaver and castorum (Outfits 1864-1870).[28] In regard to liquor, the post would supposedly have been influenced by the resolutions that no spirits be used or imported into the Company's territory save in the District of Assiniboia and on the route from there to York Factory (Outfit 1862) and that no more liquor be sold to the Indians (Outfit 1870).[29] Measures which applied specifically to the Saskatchewan District and which perhaps affected Fort Assiniboine were that provisions were to be gathered for the Methye Portage and Norway and Cumberland Houses and also that efforts were to be made to obtain more buffalo robes (Outfits 1861-1870).[30]

In Outfit 1872 the Saskatchewan District was once again to send country produce (pack cords) to New Caledonia, although the route taken was not through the old Leather (Yellowhead) Pass but by way of Lesser Slave Lake and Dunvegan.[31] This instance is an exception to the normal routine of Fort Assiniboine as a local way station in the Saskatchewan District. During Outfits 1874-1876, Chief Factor Hardisty was ordered to help the Lower Saskatchewan (later Saskatchewan) District with as great a quantity of provisions and country produce as possible. During Outfit

1874 he was also to send country produce in the form of pack cords, pemmican, leather tents and buffalo sinews to Norway House, arrival to take place in the summer of 1875.[32]

Fort Assiniboine's important role during this period was one of a local way station within the transport network of the Saskatchewan District. It linked Lesser Slave Lake and, to a lesser extent than previously, Jasper House to Edmonton. The trail to Fort Assiniboine also served to connect the posts at Lac Ste. Anne, Lac La Nonne, and St. Albert with Edmonton.

Edmonton continued to be the depot in this network for Fort Assiniboine during this period. The outfit for and returns from the post travelled through Edmonton, as in Outfit 1866. Calder departed with his outfit October 5, 1866, and brought in the outfit's returns May 12, 1867. The post's summer returns of 1866 had come in to Edmonton on September 27, 1866.[33] Communication between the two posts was year-round. In addition to spring, fall and autumn, men passed between them in the middle of the winter as well. The winter express passed to Fort Assiniboine through Edmonton, and provisions were sometimes taken to Fort Assiniboine in the winter in readiness for the spring brigades. This was the case in February, 1865.[34] This points out another continuing function of Edmonton as a depot for Fort Assiniboine-supply. As already mentioned, Calder and one man arrived at Edmonton on July 18, 1868,

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in quest of provisions for their post.[35] The following spring six bushels of seed potatoes were sent to Fort Assiniboine.[36] Edmonton also supplied provisions for the brigades coming through in the spring, as described above. It supplied articles other than food, such as forged products; the Edmonton post journal noted that in September and October of 1866, the blacksmith was making articles for Fort Assiniboine.[37] Edmonton was a personnel base for the other post during this period; in the summer of 1868 two men returned from building boats for the transport network at Fort Assiniboine.[38] Edmonton was the horse base for the other post as well; on April 13, 1869, two men left Edmonton with horses and pack saddles for Fort Assiniboine, for the use of the brigades with returns arriving there in the coming weeks.[39] Edmonton remained the depot as Fort Assiniboine reverted from a transcontinental to a local way station, and the relationship between the two posts remained much the same through the transition in role and identity for Fort Assiniboine. There were some changes in the relationship. The personnel exchange was different in that there is no evidence during this period of the manager of the post residing at Edmonton and commuting to his post as was sometimes the case in previous times.[40] No longer were Columbia and New Caledonia goods, men, express etc. regularly shipped between the two points as had been the case during the previous period.

Fort Assiniboine also had a changed relationship with

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Jasper House during this period. Although it is certain that the returns from Jasper House came through Fort Assiniboine in the spring of 1865,[41] there is no other evidence to indicate for certain that goods, furs, etc. were shipped between Edmonton and Jasper House through Fort Assiniboine during these years. It is possible that such was the case, but it is also possible that the reverse was true. An alternate route from Edmonton to Jasper House had been opened in 1858 by H.J. Moberly. This route followed the trail to Lac Ste. Anne and then struck straight across country for Jasper House, completely bypassing the route up the Athabasca via Fort Assiniboine.[42] Use of this trail had continued into the period after 1860-1861 and the route had become established. The outfit for Jasper House is noted in the Edmonton journals for Outfits 1868-1870 as having left in carts for Lac Ste. Anne. Horses would be used from Lac Ste. Anne and the carts sent back to Edmonton.[43] Possibly the arrangement came into use that outfits went by the direct trail and returns came through Fort Assiniboine. However, it is also possible that any traffic from Jasper House to Edmonton used the direct trail. At any rate, the direct route by the 1860's had definitely decreased the amount of traffic between Jasper House and Fort Assiniboine. Travellers used the direct trail. Milton and Cheadle, for example, used the direct road to Jasper House, which they described as obstructed by fallen timber and bogs, in 1863.[44] A year

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earlier the famous Overlanders of 1862 had also used the route.[45] The result of this shift from the Athabasca was that Fort Assiniboine became, for the most part, a way station between Edmonton and Lesser Slave Lake.

Thus, during this period, Lesser Slave Lake became the post which Fort Assiniboine linked for certain to Edmonton, Jasper House possessing its own direct route to the headquarters post. Horetzky remarked on this state of affairs on his arrival at the fort on September 8, 1872: "The so-called 'Fort' is . . . now used as a sort of half-way house between the two important posts of Lesser Slave Lake and Edmonton."[46] Fort Assiniboine connected Lesser Slave Lake to Edmonton, as it had for nearly 40 years and its relationship with the post continued as before during these years. The outfit would be brought to the fort on horses, or possibly in carts, and would then be embarked in boats for Lesser Slave Lake. The returns would travel by the reverse route. In Outfit 1863, for example, the Lesser Slave Lake outfit departed from Edmonton on September 8, and the returns arrived on horseback on May 10, 1864.[47] On September 9, 1869, the Lesser Slave Lake outfit left Edmonton on 18 horses and in two carts. The returns of that outfit arrived May 13, 1870.[48] Fort Assiniboine served as a storehouse at which furs from Lesser Slave Lake were sometimes deposited at varying times of the year. On February 18, 1865, for example, men with horses and sleds set out from Edmonton to retrieve Lesser Slave

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Lake returns deposited at Fort Assiniboine.[49] When McGillivray, the man in charge of Lesser Slave Lake, arrived at Edmonton in September 1868 to get his outfit, he brought out 70 packs of furs which had been left at Fort Assiniboine.[50] One can therefore see that, with the winter express from York Factory which came to Lesser Slave Lake from Edmonton via Fort Assiniboine, the transport system produced year-round communication between Lesser Slave Lake and Fort Assiniboine. Finally, there was possibly shipment of goods and materials back and forth between the two posts, as had been the case during the period prior to 1861-62.[51]

The Fort Assiniboine trail also linked other posts to Edmonton - Lac Ste. Anne, St. Albert, and Lac La Nonne. Although these posts' traffic did not pass through Fort Assiniboine, it did pass over the trail built between the old post and Edmonton. The outfit for Lac La Nonne, for example, left Edmonton September 27, 1867.[52] Outfits, returns, supplies, etc. passed over the trail to these posts except when they were closed: Lac Ste. Anne during the summer of 1863, St. Albert during the summer of 1867, and Lac La Nonne during the summers of 1867-1871. The last two posts were both opened during the winter of 1866-67.[53]

The point of view taken in this thesis has been that Fort Assiniboine's function as a way station on a transcontinental route carrying personnel, express, etc. finally stopped with the conclusion of Outfit 1860, as detailed in the previous chapter.[54] In 1872, however, two men travelled from Edmonton to the Western Department via Fort Assiniboine, Lesser Slave Lake, and Peace River,[55] and also during the autumn of this outfit the Saskatchewan District was to send pack cords to New Caledonia by the same route, as noted previously.[56] At first this evidence would seem to prove that Fort Assiniboine might not have lost its transcontinental transport significance. However, this role had ceased, at the time specified above. This instance of transferral of men and material is the only known one after 1860-61. As far as is definitely known, this measure was not repeated. Moreover, this was not a transcontinental movement of men from York Factory but a transfer of men and leather from Edmonton to the Western Department.

Fort Assiniboine, whose importance was due to its role in local transport, was abandoned in 1877 because it finally lost even this importance and because it was not sufficiently profitable to be kept open as a fur post. It has been seen that the post's real value during these last years was only as a link between Edmonton and Lesser Slave Lake. During Outfits 1875-1877, events were to take place which would effect a new link between these two points and, together with Fort Assiniboine's comparatively low fur priority, see the end of the post's career as a Hudson's Bay Company establishment.

Fort Assiniboine's fate was, on the one hand,

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determined by the end of its usefulness as a transport post. This was a result of the Hudson's Bay Company building a new road to the Athabasca River which ran north from Edmonton to terminate at the new post (and later settlement) of Athabasca Landing. This road was in fact designed to replace the old trail to Fort Assiniboine, which had continued to be troublesome because of its being obstructed with fallen timber and mud.[57] By 1875 this state of affairs, the concern in the Company with the expense of overland transport during this post-monopoly period,[58] and information in regard to the road described above, led Chief Factor Richard Hardisty of Edmonton and the Council of the Northern Department to consider the possibility of replacing the Fort Assiniboine trail with another route to the Athabasca River. In his report to James A. Grahame, Chief Commissioner of the Company at Fort Garry, dated June 8, 1875, Hardisty stated that the fate of Fort Assiniboine was uncertain. The road was so bad, after the rains and snow of the previous summer and winter, that freighters would not try to use it. He also stated that knowledgeable natives had told him that a good road could be easily cut to a location on the Athabasca two days down from Fort Assiniboine. Aside from the physical advantages of such a road, it would save two days' expense on the trip to Lesser Slave Lake, an important consideration in view of the heavy land transport expense of the time. Finally, Hardisty noted that if the

Iroquois of Jasper House could be persuaded to stay at the post on "Smoking River" (Smoky River post), it could be supplied from Edmonton through Lesser Slave Lake, and Jasper House would not have to be kept up.[59] Thus Hardisty envisaged changes in the transport network which consisted not only of an improvement of the route to Lesser Slave Lake but also a scheme for using it as a relay point for goods to be carried to Company posts further north and west. Hardisty's ideas were embodied in the instructions issued to him at the Northern Department Council meeting at Carlton the same summer:

> 26. That with a view of relieving the Transport to Lesser Slave Lake, Chief Factor R. Hardisty be instructed to examine the Country between Edmonton and the nearest point on the Athabasca River below Slave Lake River and proceed with the construction of the road this autumn if a better route is found than the one at present made use of to Fort Assiniboine: and that he instruct W. Young to examine the country between Lesser Slave Lake, and the Forks of the Peace and Smoky Rivers; reporting on the practicability and probable cost of making a road between these two points.[60]

Work was begun on the new road in the autumn of 1875; it was completed during that outfit, and in use by July 1876.[61]

It was during the Northern Department Council meeting at Carlton in July 1876 that the first instructions were sent out for the inauguration of the new roads to Athabasca Landing and from Lesser Slave Lake to Peace River:

> 25. That Chief Factor Richard Hardisty be instructed to forward to Lesser Slave Lake, by the new road to the Athabasca

> River, 500 pces. of Goods, intended for the trade of the Upper Peace River Posts as early as possible after the same shall have been landed at Edmonton from the Steamer "Northcote".
>
> 84. That Chief Factor Richard Hardisty and Rodk. R. MacFarlane (in charge of the Athabasca District, at Fort Chipewyan) be instructed to make arrangements for opening up this autumn a cart road from Lesser Slave Lake to the nearest & most eligible point on the Peace River for the transport of the Outfits and Returns of the Posts in Upper Peace River.[62]

Fifty head of oxen were also to be brought to Lesser Slave Lake for service on the portage between there and the Peace River.[63] The road was therefore fully put into service in Outfit 1876; the Edmonton post journal recorded that in May and June of 1877 men were sent to Athabasca Landing to build boats and take carts to get the returns from Lesser Slave Lake, the last of which arrived on June 26, 1877. The goods for Outfit 1877 were sent from Edmonton by the new road on August 13, 1877.[64]

The new road system was thereafter a main supply and return network for Lesser Slave Lake, the posts of the Peace River District (Dunvegan, St. John's, Hudson's Hope, Battle River, and Smoky River)[65] and, to some extent, the Athabasca and New Caledonia Districts. During the outfits after 1876, the Peace River District outfit, and, from 1878 on, country produce for New Caledonia in the form of buffalo skins, pemmican, and sinews were shipped from Edmonton through Lesser Slave Lake to their destinations.

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In addition, some of the outfits for the Athabasca District were shipped to Athabasca Landing and thence downriver to the posts of that district. To expedite the scheme the Company retained a number of oxen at Lesser Slave Lake for the road between there and the Peace River.[66]

Thus Fort Assiniboine's role in the transport network from Edmonton was phased out during Outfits 1875-1876. This can be considered as the major cause of its abandonment by the Hudson's Bay Company. Although Fort Assiniboine brought in small returns, it could be managed economically; this was the case during Outfit 1874, according to Hardisty.[67] Hardisty, however, based his conviction that the post's future was uncertain on the fact that the road was so bad;[68] it can be inferred from this that Fort Assiniboine's main importance was as a transport point. This conclusion is reinforced by the post's low priority as a fur trade post, as revealed in Appendices 3 and 4. Thus, once the new transport network was well established (Outfit 1876), the post's useful life was over, and it was probably closed during the summer of 1877, after the conclusion of Outfit 1876. The minutes of the Council of the Northern Department support this assumption; Fort Assiniboine was listed during the minutes of 1875 and 1876 among the posts of the Edmonton District, with an interpreter in charge of it. The interpreter was not named. The minutes of 1877 contain no mention of Fort Assiniboine, and the measures present therein, such as for the transport of portions of

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the Upper Peace River and Athabasca outfits through Edmonton over the road to Athabasca Landing and on to their destinations,[69] clearly show that the new road was in full use during that outfit and that the old route was finished. Thus it is quite likely that the closure date for Fort Assiniboine can be set at some time during the summer of 1877.

This assumption is also reinforced by a further measure of the Council of the Northern Department related not to transport but to fur trading procedures during the years after the end of the monopoly. Beaver had been replaced by silk in hats;[70] and there was considerable competition from free traders.[71] The result of this was a drive for economy, which was embodied in resolution 82 of the minutes of the Council of the Northern Department for 1877. The heavy decline in the value of furs was to be met with a maximum reduction of the Indian tariffs, the highest possible prices being charged on fancy goods, the reduction of summer servant levels to the absolute minimum, and, most important here, the closure of or reduction of business at all unremunerative posts and the closure of outposts so as to achieve a reduction of district working expenses.[72] Fort Assiniboine had been classified as an outpost during Outfit 1874.[73] It thus seems likely that the old post was affected by this measure, which probably sealed its fate.

All that remained at Fort Assiniboine, as far as is

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known, were the buildings and other physical property (i.e., fur press) on the site, and the H.B.C. reserve of 50 acres, which was five miles down river on the south bank. The reserve was surveyed by W.S. Gore during the months of January and February of 1873, and Gore noted in his report to Donald Smith, dated November 25, 1873, that the post buildings were to be moved there at once.[74] It is rather unlikely that, at such a late date, such an occurrence took place. Moreover, the fact that the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada cairn was located on the original site seems to deny that the buildings were moved.

Thus ended over 50 years of existence for Fort Assiniboine. It had risen from a simple fur trade establishment to become an important way station for both transcontinental and local traffic. The post served faithfully in both roles until its transport usefulness ended and, having become unprofitable to keep open as a fur trading post, it was abandoned. Although always a simple and small establishment, it nevertheless played an important part in the workings of the Hudson's Bay Company's trade network for many years. Its years of existence were those of the final period of the Company's monopoly, the years when the "Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay" was at its greatest degree of consolidation under that monopoly. The fort was established only two years after the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay

Company and its rival, The North West Company. Some of the men who served at Fort Assiniboine, such as Chief Factor William McIntosh, were former Nor'Westers. The post was abandoned only a few years after the Company's monopoly had been relinquished. Thus the lifetime of Fort Assiniboine spanned one of the most significant and important periods of the Hudson's Bay Company's long history. A new era was taking over from the old. Even while the post was still in existence, the Company's monopoly lands were surrendered and its reserves set up. The settlement era was taking up where that of the fur trade monopoly was leaving off.

Footnotes

[1] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1861. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/3. For a biography of Olivier Belrose see Appendix 5.

[2] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1862-1870. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/3. Also extracts from Memoranda of same, 1872. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 38/4. Also Edmonton post journal, 1862-1873. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/32-39.

[3] Charles Horetzky, Canada On The Pacific (Montreal, 1874), pp. 16-17.

[4] See Appendix 5.

[5] Edmonton post journal, 1873. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/39.

[6] Edmonton List of Servants, Outfit 1874. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/f/1. Also Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1874. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 38/2.

[7] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1874-1876. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 38/2.

[8] Edmonton post journal, 1865-66. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/34.

[9] For a discussion of this condition during the years prior to 1861-62, see Chapter 2, pp. 44, 61-62.

[10] Edmonton post journal, July 18 and September 28, 1868. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/36.

[11] Edmonton post journal, 1870-71. Hudson's Bay Archives, B/60/a/37.

[12] Horetzky, Canada On The Pacific, p. 16.

[13] See Appendix 1 and Chapter 2, pp. 38-39.

[14] See Chapter 2, pp. 49-50.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Horetzky, Canada On The Pacific, p. 16.

[17] Ibid., p. 17.

[18] Ibid., p. 16.

[19] Deputy Surveyor W.S. Gore's Field Notes Diary and Reports of Survey of Hudson's Bay Company Reserves in the North West Territories--1872 and 1873. Hudson's Bay Archives, A. 72/7.

[20] Beckles Wilson, *The Great Company* (London, 1900). Vol. 2, p. 314.

[21] Horetzky, *Canada On The Pacific*, p. 16.

[22] See Chapter 3, p. 100. Also note 10.

[23] Edmonton post journal, December 29, 1871. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/38.

[24] D. Babcock, *A Regional History of Lesser Slave Lake* (unpublished manuscript), p. 128.

[25] Horetzky, *Canada On The Pacific*, pp. 9-11.

[26] Edmonton Report, 1875. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/e/11.

[27] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1861-1870. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/3.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1862 and 1870. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/3.

[30] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1861-1870. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/3.

[31] Extracts from Memoranda of Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1872. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 38/4. Although the region previously known as New Caledonia had been renamed the Western Department, it was referred to in this source by its previous name.

[32] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1874-1876. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 38/2. By 1874 the old Saskatchewan District, still extant in 1872 according to Extracts from Memoranda of Minutes of Council Northern Department of that year, had been split into the Lower and Upper Saskatchewan Districts. The former contained the following posts: Carlton House; Fort Pitt; Battle River; Lac La Biche; Fort Albert; Fort à la Corne; and Moose Woods. The Upper Saskatchewan District contained the following posts: Edmonton House; Lac Ste. Anne; Jasper House; Victoria; St. Albert; Egg Lake; Lesser Slave Lake; Rocky Mountain House; Pigeon Lake; and Fort Assiniboine. In 1875 the Upper Saskatchewan District was renamed the

Edmonton District, while the Lower Saskatchewan District succeeded to the older title of Saskatchewan District.

[33] Edmonton post journal, 1866-67. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/36.

[34] Edmonton post journal, February 18, 1865. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/33.

[35] See Chapter 3, p. 100.

[36] Edmonton post journal, 1868-69. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/36-37.

[37] Edmonton post journal, 1866-67. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/36.

[38] Edmonton post journal, 1868-69. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/36.

[39] Edmonton post journal, 1868-1870. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/36-37.

[40] See Chapter 2, pp. 36-38.

[41] Edmonton post journal, February 17-18, 1865. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/33. Provisions were sent to Fort Assiniboine for the spring brigades bringing returns from Jasper House and Lesser Slave Lake.

[42] See Chapter 2, p. 64.

[43] Edmonton post journals, 1868-69 to 1870-71. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/36-37.

[44] Viscount Milton and Dr. Cheadle, *The North-West Passage By Land* (London, 1865; reprint ed., Toronto, 1970). pp. 203, 220.

[45] M.S. Wade, *The Overlanders of '62* (Victoria, 1931) Archives of British Columbia Memoir No. IX. pp. 79, 89, 97.

[46] Horetzky, *Canada On The Pacific*, p. 16.

[47] Edmonton post journal, 1863-64. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/33.

[48] Edmonton post journal, 1869-70. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/37.

[49] Edmonton post journal, 1864-65. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/33.

[50] Edmonton post journal, 1868-69. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/36.

[51] See Chapter 2, p. 61.

[52] Edmonton post journal, 1867-68. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/36.

[53] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1863-1870. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/3.

[54] See Chapter 2, pp. 71-74, 79-83.

[55] Horetzky, Canada On The Pacific, pp. 4-5.

[56] See Chapter 3, p. 105.

[57] Ibid., p. 104.

[58] H.A. Innis, The Fur Trade In Canada, Revised edition. (Toronto, 1970), pp. 342-344.

[59] Edmonton Report, 1875. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/e/11.

[60] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1875. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 38/2.

[61] W.H. Oppen, Athabasca Landing (Honours paper, Department of History, University of Alberta, Edmonton, 1972), pp. 23-24.

[62] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1876. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 38/2.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Edmonton post journal, 1877. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/40.

[65] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1878. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 38/2.

[66] Ibid., 1877-1884. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 38/2-4. Also Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada, p. 344.

[67] Edmonton Report, 1875. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/e/11.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1875-1877. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 38/2.

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[70] Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada, p. 341.

[71] Edmonton Report, 1875. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/e/11.

[72] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1877. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 38/2.

[73] Accounts received at Commissioner's office from H.Q.'s of Northern Department Districts--Edmonton District Balance Sheet, Outfit 1874. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 30/3.

[74] Deputy Surveyor W.S. Gore's Field Notes Diary and Reports of Survey of Hudson's Bay Company Reserves in the North West Territories--1872 and 1873. Hudson's Bay Archives, A. 72/7.

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Chapter 4

Fort Assiniboine 1877-1908:

Towards a Settled Community

During the 31-year period of isolation which followed the closure of Fort Assiniboine by the Hudson's Bay Company, the area of the post, which would eventually become a settled community, experienced a considerable degree of isolation. This isolation was much more severe than even the periods of closure by the Company previous to 1877 had been. Eighty miles out in the forest from Edmonton on a nearly unused trail, Fort Assiniboine for most of this period was a forgotten shadow of its former self. However, it did not completely fade away into simply an historic site cairn. The transportation and communication pattern between Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine, which had been set up by the forged link of the trail between the two in 1825, was to continue in existence. Though dormant during most of this period, it eventually would resurrect the abandoned post from its isolation and aid its transition into a settled community. By 1908 the township containing the fort site, township 62, range six, west of the fifth meridian, had been surveyed and settlers were in the process of securing homesteads, the first of which were officially recorded in 1909. This chapter will examine the reasons for and conditions of Fort Assiniboine's long isolation and the process of its resurrection.

Some of the last vestiges of the Hudson's Bay Company

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to remain in the locality after the post's closure were quickly eradicated. Local tradition holds that the buildings of Fort Assiniboine had been burned down by the beginning of settlement of the township.[1] It is possible that this happened quite soon after the closure of the post by the Company. G.M. Dawson, who passed through Fort Assiniboine in 1879, said that the abandoned buildings had been burned a short time before.[2] Thus the physical presence of the old post was gone. The Hudson's Bay Company reserve of 50 acres remained, however, and would later figure into the settlement process of the area. The grant was finalized on February 11, 1882.[3]

During the period extending from the closure of the post to the beginnings of permanent settlement, the Fort Assiniboine locality experienced a very isolated existence which was really only broken by the Klondike gold rush. A number of hopeful would-be prospectors struck out for the Yukon using the old fur trade trail from Edmonton to Fort Assiniboine, a trail cut through the Swan Hills to the western end of Lesser Slave Lake, and on to Peace River and the gold fields further north. This period can then be basically divided into two parts: the years from 1877 to the point in time just before the Klondike rush; and a second period extending from the Klondike rush to the survey and beginning of permanent settlement of the Fort Assiniboine township, township 62, range six, west of the fifth, in 1908.[4] What went on in the area of the old

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post during these years?

Despite the fact that Fort Assiniboine had been abandoned by the Company and the trail had fallen into disuse, the route remained known and was used by at least one travelling missionary, as missionaries had used it in previous years.[5] Reverend A.C. Garrioch of the Church of England, during the months of August, September, and October of 1880 passed through old Fort Assiniboine on his way to his new post at Fort Vermilion. He left Edmonton, travelling to the abandoned post by the old fur trade trail, and made his way through the Swan Hills to Lesser Slave Lake. Taking the wagon road to Peace River Crossing constructed by the Hudson's Bay Company,[6] he then descended the Peace River to Fort Vermilion.[7]

Although Fort Assiniboine had been abandoned by the Hudson's Bay Company as a fur post, it is possible that the area was visited, from 1877 up to the Klondike rush, by free traders and trappers. In 1884 Colin Fraser, Jr., the son of Simpson's piper who had been in charge of Fort Assiniboine for the Company at one time,[8] set up a fur trading operation at Lesser Slave Lake. He constructed a post the next year.[9] During the years 1890-1895 independent traders moved into the Wabasca region, north of Lesser Slave Lake.[10] It is possible that some of the fur traders who were doing business in the region north of Edmonton during these years and the trappers who supplied them, may have visited the Fort Assiniboine area.

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The natives of the area may have trapped for these concerns. This would have been especially true of those who lived on the north side of the Athabasca River, the boundary separating the official areas of Treaties Six and Eight. The Crees north of the Athabasca made no treaty until 1899, when Treaty Number Eight was signed with them. The Crees, Assiniboines and Saulteaux of the Fort Assiniboine region who had traded at the post and who possibly continued to live there after the 1877 closure, but who lived south of the Athabasca River, were included in Treaty Number Six, signed at Fort Carlton in 1876.[11] Reserves for these people were set up shortly thereafter,[12] and it is possible that those who had lived near Fort Assiniboine moved to these reserves and did not trap in the woods near the fort site. Their fellows north of the river, for whom reserves would not have been set up until at least 1899, continued to live in the wild and probably trapped fur to trade with these independent traders.

The Fort Assiniboine locality was also visited, during these years, by Professor John Macoun. Naturalist, explorer, and proponent of the Palliser triangle as a fertile agricultural region,[13] Macoun in 1882 published an epic describing the history and prospects of the Canadian West.[14] This book carried the lengthy title of Manitoba and the Great North-West; the field for investment; the home of the emigrant, being a full and complete history of the country. This volume contains several references to the state of Fort

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Assiniboine at the time and its future prospects. Macoun noted the complete absence of roads in the country north of the North Saskatchewan River, there being only trails; a map shows "Old Fort Assiniboine" and the trail to it from Edmonton, which continues on to Lesser Slave Lake. The Athabasca River valley at Fort Assiniboine was generally level, and the soil on either side was excellent sandy loam carrying timber, rich grass, and peavine. The river, Macoun felt, was navigable for steamboats from there down to Lake Athabasca, save for the Grand Rapids, and development of the region would not be delayed.[15] The author does not mention any people living in the area of Fort Assiniboine. Macoun's estimate that development would come soon was, however, to prove somewhat optimistic. Development of this area would not really begin until the process of entering homesteads or otherwise legally taking up land was begun. This, in the Fort Assiniboine district, did not begin until 1907, with the first land being legally filed on for homestead entry in the Fort Assiniboine township in 1909.[16]

During this pre-Klondike gold rush period Fort Assiniboine possibly did see some prospectors, hopeful of finding rich deposits of gold in the Athabasca River. According to J.G. MacGregor, a number of parties of prospectors were leaving Edmonton in 1890 for the gravel bars of the Athabasca, and in 1895 about 85 men travelled over the old trail from Edmonton to Fort Assiniboine to prospect for gold there.[17] The Edmonton Bulletin of September 14, 1896 noted that gold miners were working on the McLeod and Smoky Rivers, west of Fort Assiniboine, and that gold was to be found on the banks of the Athabasca River.[18] These miners probably used the same method as was prevalent on the North Saskatchewan River around Edmonton, described as follows:

> Some of the gold was panned, but most seems to have been obtained by the use of sluices, and a variation of the sluice called a grizzly, a sort of wheelbarrow construction which contained wooden riffles to catch the free gold as water washed over the sand and gravel and permit it to drop to a catch-blanket below.[19]

It is possible that prospectors, like trappers, utilized the resources of the Fort Assiniboine area before the Klondike gold rush.

Despite this marginal usage of the post area, in the main Fort Assiniboine had a very isolated existence during these years. This can be seen first of all in the transport patterns of the region of Alberta from Edmonton north. Athabasca Landing, which had replaced Fort Assiniboine as the Hudson's Bay Company Athabasca River connection point with Edmonton for river transport to Lesser Slave Lake and the Peace River area,[20] continued in this role during these years. The Council of the Northern Department at its meeting at Fort Carlton in 1882 decreed, for example, that the Peace River outfit for 1883 was to be forwarded through Edmonton, and that Chief Factor Richard Hardisty, in charge

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at Edmonton, was to supervise its transport as far as Athabasca Landing. The Edmonton District, moreover, was to supply country produce for the transport service between Lesser Slave Lake and Peace River Crossing. The Edmonton District at the time consisted of the following posts: Edmonton, Lac Ste. Anne, Bow River, Jasper House, and Lac La Biche.[21] In 1888 the Company built the sternwheeler "Athabasca" to serve as transport on this route and by 1892 she had ascended the Lesser Slave River to Lesser Slave Lake.[22] Athabasca Landing also became the Company's shipping point for goods going to Fort Chipewyan and the Mackenzie River posts. Chief Factor Hardisty was to forward the Peace River outfit for 1884 to Lesser Slave Lake, and the Athabasca District Outfit for 1885 to Athabasca Landing.[23] In this respect the Edmonton-Athabasca Landing route replaced the Methye Portage route as that used for supplying the posts of the Far North, especially after the steamboat "Grahame" was launched by the Company at Fort Chipewyan in 1883 to ply the lower Athabasca. In 1886 the screw steamer "Wrigley" was commissioned and began transport service for the Company on Great Slave Lake and down the Mackenzie River.[24] The Company was not the only commercial concern which was using Athabasca Landing as a jumping-off point for the Far North. Edmonton merchants like Richard Secord were sending merchandise down the Athabasca River, to be sold or traded for furs, in the years before the Klondike gold rush. Secord's agent at Fort Chipewyan in 1893 was Colin

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Fraser, Jr.[25] The important point here is that Fort Assiniboine did not share in this commerce. It was isolated from the business stream emanating from Edmonton during these years, save for the trappers, prospectors and travellers (Reverend Garrioch and John Macoun) mentioned above.

Fort Assiniboine was also isolated from the process of settlement which was going on in this pre-Klondike period in and around Edmonton. Edmonton's post office opened on February 1, 1877[26] and by 1889 a local board of trade had been established. In 1891, an electric light plant was erected, and in 1892 Edmonton, with a population of 700 was incorporated as a town. By 1894 the population had risen to 1,021.[27] Settlement was also spreading outward from Edmonton along the old fur trade trail to Fort Assiniboine. St. Albert had 1,000 people in 1888, and a telephone had been installed in the Bishop's residence three years earlier. At this time the settlement contained many residents of mixed blood, some of whom might have been relatives of men who had served at Fort Assiniboine in fur trade times: Sam and Alfred Cunningham, and Octave Bellerose.[28] A post office was opened in St. Albert in 1894.[29] The location known as Riviere Qui Barré, which Edward Ermatinger had passed in September 1827 on his way to the Pacific coast with the Columbia express,[30] had a Hudson's Bay Company store in 1885. This was looted by Chief Alexis' bands of Assiniboines from Lac. Ste. Anne and from Riviere Qui

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Barre itself during the North West Rebellion, on April 10, 1885.[31] A post office was opened at Riviere Qui Barre in 1895.[32] Finally, trading posts were opened in 1896, by Gordon MacDonald and the Ross brothers, on both sides of the Pembina River at MacDonald's Crossing, later known as Belvedere. These posts served Indians and métis who trapped in the Lac La Nonne area and north of Fort Assiniboine in the Swan Hills and Timeu Creek region.[33] Thus civilization was advancing on the old trail to Fort Assiniboine during these years but had not arrived by the time of the Klondike gold rush in 1897-98. Except for trappers, prospectors, and a couple of travellers, Fort Assiniboine had a very isolated existence.

This state of affairs was the same with regard to North West Mounted Police patrols. A detachment had been established at Edmonton during October 1874 under Inspector W.D. Jarvis and was moved to Fort Saskatchewan in 1875.[34] From this post the force would make patrols in subsequent years towards Fort Assiniboine but probably not visiting it for certain, as there were, as far as can be determined, no settlers established there during these pre-Klondike years. The Fort Saskatchewan detachment helped hailed-out settlers in St. Albert in 1876, establishing a precedent for future patrol objectives.[35] By 1887, the country north of the North Saskatchewan River, still largely unfamiliar wilderness, contained some Indian reserves and the police began to make patrols into this northern area, including St.

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Albert again. An outpost was built at St. Albert, and the police assisted settlers as far west as there in 1888. In 1889 an intermittent detachment was stationed there. An outpost was established at Edmonton, from which patrols were made to Lac Ste. Anne and Rivière Qui Barré. Some of these outlying detachments (Edmonton and St. Albert) may have been withdrawn to "G" Division headquarters (Fort Saskatchewan) with the coming of winter. In 1892, with increased numbers of settlers moving into the country north of Edmonton, a patrol was made as far as Athabasca Landing. In 1893 outposts were established at Lesser Slave Lake and at Grand Rapids on the Athabasca River, for purposes of liquor surveillance. Also in 1893 police fire guardians were stationed at Edmonton, South Edmonton, St. Albert, and Lac Ste. Anne.[36] By 1896 the North West Mounted Police, experienced at helping settlers, had become agricultural experts, welfare officials, land agents, and immigration officers.[37] The Force was moving towards Fort Assiniboine but had not reached it by the time that the news of the Klondike gold rush broke on Edmonton, Fort Assiniboine, and the world in 1897.

The gold rush to the Klondike was to have an important effect on Fort Assiniboine. The old trail from Edmonton, which had survived in people's memories during the dormant years since 1877, was resurrected for a time and the old post was rescued temporarily from its isolation. News of George Carmack's big strike in 1896 on Bonanza Creek in

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the Yukon and subsequent discoveries was sent out to Ottawa on January 21, 1897,[38] and news of the Klondike strikes reached Edmonton by May of 1897. Soon many hopeful millionaires were concentrated in Edmonton, ready to strike out for the Klondike on the old trail to Fort Assiniboine, on to Lesser Slave Lake (where Grouard is at present) and Peace River Crossing, and then by water to the Yukon. Public meetings in Edmonton, Fort Saskatchewan, and St. Albert sent resolutions to Ottawa demanding the construction of a good road from Edmonton to Fort Assiniboine and on through the Swan Hills to Lesser Slave Lake.[39] The trail to Fort Assiniboine from Edmonton had not been forgotten.

Edmonton, which by 1897 was the end of steel of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway,[40] was the gateway to several routes to the Klondike gold fields at Dawson City. The trail to Fort Assiniboine led to Lesser Slave Lake and from there to Peace River Crossing. From here an overland portage was made to the Fort Nelson River. This river was followed to its junction with the Liard River, which was ascended to the continental divide. This was crossed and the Pelly and Yukon Rivers were then used as highways to Dawson City. The route through Lac Ste. Anne, modern Whitecourt, and Fort St. John also led to the Liard River and on as above. The distance to Dawson City by these routes was about 1,500 miles. The other main route from Edmonton was by trail to Athabasca Landing and down the Athabasca, Slave, and Mackenzie water systems, crossing at

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various points over the divide separating the Mackenzie and Yukon valleys. To get to Dawson City by this route involved a voyage of about 2,500 miles. The longer route, however, proved the more passable, two-thirds of its travellers getting through. Of the estimated 766 men, nine women and 4,000 horses who used the overland trails from Edmonton, only 160 men completed the journey.[41] The route through Fort Assiniboine was not the only one of the overland Klondike trails from Edmonton. However, it did bring the post back into the transport and communication patterns of the area north of and including Edmonton.

The demands for roadwork by the merchants and citizens of Edmonton, Fort Saskatchewan and St. Albert, were answered with the dispatch by the North West Territories government of T.W. Chalmers, road engineer, and a crew to Fort Assiniboine to cut a trail from there to Lesser Slave Lake through the Swan Hills.[42] Chalmers and his crew left Edmonton on November 8, 1897 and by July 1898 the Chalmers Trail was finished.[43] After arriving at or very near Fort Assiniboine the trail went northeast to Doris Creek and then to Timeu Creek, which it followed upstream for a short distance, and then struck across country for Lesser Slave Lake Settlement, now known as Grouard, at the west end of the lake. According to a Topographical Surveys Branch map of 1910 a branch of the Klondike Trail also ascended the Freeman River and went on to Lesser Slave Lake.[44] Ferries were put in operation on the Pembina River at

MacDonald's Crossing (later Belvedere) and at the junction of Horse Creek with the Athabasca River, four miles downstream from Fort Assiniboine.[45] Thus the Klondike gold rush resurrected the locality of Fort Assiniboine from its isolation and put it back into the transport and communication network of northern Alberta, if only temporarily.

The gold-seekers began to use the trail to Fort Assiniboine and Lesser Slave Lake soon after Chalmers had started work and by Christmas 1897 a number of them were camped along the trail.[46] In 1898 some caught up with the work party beyond Fort Assiniboine and in some cases forged ahead and cut their own trails. The Chalmers Trail was a cruel and difficult route; it was littered with cast-off equipment, and carcasses of 2,000 horses which had starved to death in the Swan Hills, which were empty of feed. Nearly 100 men gave up short of Peace River Crossing and returned to Edmonton.[47] Frank Walker of Fort Saskatchewan who departed Edmonton with five others on March 8, 1898, noted that the hill on the north bank of the Athabasca, where the river was crossed near Fort Assiniboine, was strewn with littered boxes, harness, and smashed sleighs.[48] Only about one-fifth of the 766 men who set out for the Klondike by this, and the other overland route (by Whitecourt) from Edmonton, reached the Klondike.[49] According to a contemporary witness, most overland travellers from Edmonton took the route through the Fort Assiniboine locality and Swan Hills.[50] The effect on Fort Assiniboine

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of the Klondike gold rush was thus to get it back into the northern Alberta transport and communication system. Gold-seekers used the ferry four miles below the site of the old post and perhaps visited the site itself. What effect did the rush have on the other terminus of the old trail, Edmonton?

Edmonton was transformed by the gold rush from a small village consisting of a steamboat dock, log booms, a brick plant, two sawmills, a small business section, and the Hudson's Bay Company fort[51] into a booming supply town. It was a jumping-off and supply point for the crowds of people heading for Dawson City in quest of golden fortunes. The Edmonton Bulletin of March 3, 1898 had this to say about the hectic pace of Edmonton during the Klondike gold rush:

> The rush over the snow to the Yukon by the Edmonton route is at its height. Parties are arriving by twenties and thirties on every train and hurrying forward to take advantage of the last snow, which is gradually but steadily disappearing. The main street is now in a state of semi-slush and the strings of loaded flat sleighs travel along the side in preference to the center where the travelling is heavier. In the open, the snow is soft and commencing to settle.
>
> A walk through the bluffs in the vicinity of the Hudson's Bay Company and McDougall & Secord's stores reveals the fact that literally 'the woods are full of them.' Around the bluffs are clustered tents and tepees while bare patches on the ground, from which the snow is thawed, show where some passing pilgrim made his transient home. In the

> open all is activity and life. Loaded flat sleds are everywhere and the work of packing and collecting their outfits is being pushed by every party with all possible speed. The open space offered by the race track is utilized for breaking horses, both to ride and drive, and the scene it offers is not only lively, but amusing - to the spectator.
>
> The warm weather of the past week has greatly facilitated the work of packing and a great number of parties were enabled to complete their final arrangements, and as a result, a large exodus took place on Tuesday. All day long the streets were filled with loaded flat sleighs and bobs pulling out on their journey. At least 50 left on Tuesday alone.[52]

Obviously the gold rush resulted in much activity in Edmonton. Local merchants like McDougall & Secord, general merchants, did a lot of business outfitting Klondikers.[53] The Klondike gold rush resulted in the resurgence of the old fur trade route between Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine. Moreover the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly period relationship of Edmonton as a depot post for Fort Assiniboine was recalled, and in a minor way recreated, by the Klondike status of Edmonton as an outfitting centre and jumping-off point for the prospectors travelling the route to Fort Assiniboine and on.

The Klondike gold rush also stimulated activity in another location on the old trail. A number of the métis of St. Albert, such as one J. Cunningham, served as packers and guides for the Klondikers along the trail.[54] Perhaps this man was a relative of the John Cunningham who served at Fort Assiniboine in earlier times.[55]

The lifespan of the Klondike Trail was short. A gold strike in Alaska on Norton Sound had by the summer of 1899 begun to empty Dawson City and a new gold rush was beginning, just as the last contingent of men was arriving from Edmonton to make their fortunes in the Klondike. The rush had lasted only about three years,[56] but the stampede through Edmonton in 1897 and 1898 had temporarily resurrected Fort Assiniboine from its 20-year isolation, had seen the first ferry established on the Athabasca River near the old post, and had restored, to a certain extent, the old fur trade role of Edmonton as a depot and supply point for Fort Assiniboine. All this was due in large measure to the survival of the old trail during the dormant years and its consequent utilization as a route to the Klondike from Edmonton with the advent of the gold rush.

From the collapse of the Klondike gold rush in 1899 to the beginning of organized settlement on the Fort Assiniboine township in 1909, the post was still isolated. Some traders evidently used the old trail on occasion, however. In the autumn of 1899 one H. Rosling, who had a trading post on the Athabasca River at Prairie Creek, several miles east of the location of Jasper House, freighted supplies over the trail "to the site of the old Fort Assiniboine." He then loaded the supplies on pack horses for the trip upriver to his post. Ordinarily the supplies were packed in all the way,[57] presumably by the direct route from Edmonton to Jasper House which Henry J.

Moberly had pioneered.[58]

In the years following the Klondike gold rush settlement began to approach Fort Assiniboine in the area shown on Map 4. In the late 1890's four mixed-blood families who were connected with Fort Assiniboine in the past or who would be in the future resided in the immediate area of Lac La Nonne. Their surnames were Delorme, L'Hirondelle, Courtepatte, and Chalifoux. Pierre Delorme was a hunter, trapper, and survey party guide. The Sion area was first settled in 1903, and a post office was opened there in 1904. Enough settlers had come to the Belvedere area by 1905 to warrant a post office, with mail being hauled from Rivière Qui Barre, along the fur trade and Klondike Trail.[59] Formerly MacDonald's Crossing, Belvedere had been renamed by the new postmaster, Robert Telfer, in 1905.[60] Trading posts were set up by the firm of Henderson and Dunlop at Belvedere and Bloomsbury during the first five years of the new century, and a stopping house, and land locator by the name of John Donnelly were present at Belvedere. Settlement was also proceeding north of Belvedere; the Heaton Moor district, also reached by the Klondike Trail, received its first settlers in 1904 and a post office in 1908. Manola was first settled in 1906, mostly by Americans. There was a sawmill operating at Paddle River in 1908; this district had first been settled in 1905. At Lunnford squatters had established themselves in 1904 and 1905 and a medical doctor, Newhall, established himself there in 1907. The Glenreagh district was first settled in 1907, and Mellowdale in 1906. Many people came to Dusseldorf (later Freedom) in 1908, although some had come there earlier by the Klondike trail.[61]

During the early years of the present century the townships which would later contain the post offices and districts of Fort Assiniboine, Holmes Crossing, Freeman River, Klondike City and Topland, with which this thesis is concerned, were being surveyed into sections and quarter-sections for settlement. The locations of these settlements in the appropriate townships are shown on Map 5. In some cases they had had exterior surveys (establishing township lines) before the surveys establishing section lines were made. This was the case with township 61, range five, west of the fifth, which was first surveyed in 1904 but which was not surveyed for settlement until 1907.[62] The township containing the site of Fort Assiniboine was surveyed into sections between December 5, 1908 and February 9, 1909 by C.C. Fairchild, Dominion Land Surveyor.[63] The dates of the interior surveys of the other townships in question here are contained in Appendix 6.

Settlement was beginning on the Fort Assiniboine and Holmes Crossing townships and the township immediately to the south of Fort Assiniboine by the time of these surveys; there were twelve squatters on the former, their holdings embracing the open hay lands in sections one, two and three near the site of the old post.[64] John Paynter had been in residence on what was to be section three since June 1906, W.B. Combes on section two since July 1908, Joseph Brewster also on section two since April 1908, and Mikel Carroll on section three since May 1905. The area was referred to in the squatters' claims of these men dated December 1908 and January 1909, as Assiniboine Flats.[65] Henry C. Faust, John A. Miller and Marion Davis also squatted on land in this township in 1908, on sections 17, 3, and 10 respectively.[66] Two men, John Baston and Charles Combes squatted on sections 34 and 35 of township 61, range six, west of the fifth, immediately south of Fort Assiniboine in 1906 and 1908 respectively.[67] The land the squatters settled on in these two townships was all fair to fairly good arable river bottom land of the Athabasca and Freeman Rivers.[68] A trading post was opened by Henderson and Dunlop of Belvedere, with the above Joseph Brewster in charge, about 1905 or 1906, to serve the trappers and Indians still using the area. A trading post was opened at Klondike City, a collection of huts several miles northeast of Fort Assiniboine, by the same concern at the same time. These posts were operated for several years.[69] Squatting had also been going on before the section survey of the Holmes Crossing township, township 61, range five, west of the fifth.[70] A Scot, William B. Holmes in May 1905 squatted on land in this township, from which the old Klondike ferry at Horse Creek seems to have been removed. In 1906

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a ferry was put in again and by 1907, the year of the survey, it was at the site later known as Holmes Crossing, with Holmes being the ferryman.[71] It was on this township containing Holmes Crossing that the earliest homesteads in the Fort Assiniboine area were filed. Three were filed in 1907: W.C. McCartney, on the southeast quarter-section of section 30, on November 27, 1907; P.W. McCabe, on the southwest quarter-section, of section 30, on the same date; and Edward J. Kenealey, from England, on the southwest quarter-section of section 32, on the same date.[72] Mr. Holmes filed on a homestead on the southeast quarter-section of section 31 of this township on March 6, 1908. Henry Thomas Slaughter, a negro from Alabama, had done the same on the same quarter-section of section 32 on February 18, 1908. Gens E. Larsen filed a homestead on the northeast quarter-section of section 28 on February 21, 1908.[73] As far as is known, these men were all bachelors except Kenealey, who had a wife and four children.[74] These were the first homesteads filed in the Fort Assiniboine region. These homesteads were all on land which was fair to fairly good arable soil; it was alluvial soil of the Athabasca river bottom. Most of these homesteads also had traces of pasture and woodland soils within their boundaries.[75]

Thus the end of 1908 saw a ferry at Holmes Crossing and the beginning of settlement in the Fort Assiniboine area. Why did this process not occur sooner?

Some of the reasons for which the Fort Assiniboine area was not settled sooner were the causes for large-scale settlement in general in Western Canada having to wait until 1896, the beginning of the "Wheat Boom." The Indian title to the land was not extinguished for some years after the surrender of the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly in 1870; Treaties Six and Seven, covering much of Alberta, were not concluded until 1876 and 1877 respectively.[76] The West also had a problem in that it lacked a good year-round transportation system upon which to build an agricultural export staple economy. This problem was partially solved for modern-day Alberta, in 1883 when the Canadian Pacific Railway arrived in Calgary. However, the change of route for the railway from the north and the Yellowhead Pass to the south and the Kicking Horse Pass tended to pull settlement away from the northern areas of the North West Territories and concentrate it in the south.[77] The progress of settlement was also slowed until 1896 by the wait for Sifton's vibrant and businesslike immigration policy. In 1896 Clifford Sifton became the Minister of the Interior and embarked on the evolution of a new immigration policy, reorganizing the Department of the Interior, abolishing railway land grants, and forcing the railways to choose the balance of outstanding grants. Sifton also made a vigorous effort to recruit Eastern European and American settlers who were qualified farmers.[78] In fact, the availability of American homestead lands up to 1896 retarded Canadian settlement progress. Just at this time the free homestead land supply in the United States was drying up,[79] and Canada was beginning to attract Americans who wished to start farming.

Settlement in the Fort Assiniboine region was also delayed for several reasons of a local nature. The first of these was its remoteness in terms of communications from the rest of Alberta. Despite the arrival of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway at Strathcona in 1891, an event which was to greatly lessen much of northern Alberta's isolation,[80] the area of the old post was really not brought back into a communication pattern with Edmonton until the Klondike gold rush temporarily revived the old trail in 1897 and a ferry was put on the Athabasca near Fort Assiniboine in 1898. Thereafter things moved quickly and during the first decade of the present century, settlement had moved out towards the area and homesteads were in the process of being filed on the Fort Assiniboine township, as has been discussed already. The settlements approaching Fort Assiniboine were at first reached by the Klondike Trail, as in the case of Heaton Moor in 1904,[81] and this route was the one used to get to Fort Assiniboine, as was noted by the surveyor of the township in 1908-09.[82]

The isolation of Fort Assiniboine was also lessened by the building of more railways in northern Alberta. In 1905 the Canadian Northern arrived at Edmonton and in 1906 at St. Albert and Morinville, northwest of Edmonton. This railway building contributed considerably to settlement in northern Alberta.[83]

Another local reason for the lateness of settlement was the lateness of the section surveys which were necessary before land could be officially opened for settlement. The Sixteenth Base Line, a horizontal parallel separating townships 60 and 61, approximately six miles south of Fort Assiniboine (which was in township 62) was not surveyed until 1904,[84] and the other townships in question here were not surveyed at all until 1904 or later.[85]

Thus the end of the year 1908 saw a small group of squatters on the township containing Fort Assiniboine, living on the open hay lands near the site of the old post. They were optimistic about the future there, and surveyor C.C. Fairchild added that they felt the need for improved transportation facilities. The only real connection with the outside world was the old Klondike Trail, good in winter but wet, muddy, and nearly impassable in summer, continuing to give trouble to the new residents of Fort Assiniboine as it had done to those of earlier times.[86] On the neighbouring township containing the new ferry run by William Holmes, several homesteads had already been filed. The old trail had remained mostly dormant since the closure of the post by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1877, but it had been resurrected by the Klondike gold rush and together with the construction of railways in Alberta after 1883, the advance of surveys, and Sifton's new immigration policy, helped to begin the process of settling the Fort Assiniboine area and bringing it completely back to life.

Footnotes

[1] Interviews with Mrs. Naomi Dabels at Fort Assiniboine, May 7, 1976, and with Mr. Ray Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976. The fort site was in the south-west quarter-section of section one, township 62, range six, west of the fifth. Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 2582075 roll 3014.

[2] J.G. MacGregor, Overland to the Yellowhead (Saskatoon, 1974), p. 118.

[3] For the details of the setting up of this reserve, see Chapter 3, p. 117. The information concerning the finalization of the grant was given to me from the Hudson's Bay Company records by Mr. P. Landry, Manager of the Property Division, Hudson's Bay Company, Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg. Homestead Files, file 2582075, roll 3014.

[4] See Maps 2 to 4 for location of the trail. The site and settlement of Fort Assiniboine is located in township 62, range six, west of the fifth.

[5] See Chapter 2, p. 78.

[6] See Chapter 3, pp. 112-115.

[7] J.G. MacGregor, The Land of Twelve Foot Davis (Edmonton, 1952), pp. 254-255.

[8] See Appendices 1 and 5.

[9] J.G. MacGregor, Paddle Wheels to Bucket-Wheels on the Athabasca (Toronto, 1974), pp. 50, 92.

[10] Ibid., p. 91.

[11] H.A. Dempsey, "The Indians of Alberta" (Alberta Historical Review, Winter 1967), p. 3. See also Handbook of Indians of Canada (Toronto, 1971), p. 478 and map of treaty areas at the back of this work.

[12] The Michel Calahoo, Alexis, and Alexander Reserves between Edmonton and the Pembina River are shown in the map of the North West Territories in John Macoun, Manitoba and the Great North-West; the field for investment; the home of the emigrant, being a full and complete history of the country (Guelph, 1882).

[13] Pierre Berton, The Last Spike (Toronto, 1971), pp. 13-14.

[14] T.D. Regehr, "Historiography of the Canadian Plains After 1870", pp. 88, 98 in R. Allen, ed. A Region of the Mind (Regina, 1973).

[15] John Macoun, Manitoba and the Great North-West; the field for investment; the home of the emigrant, being a full and complete history of the country (Guelph, 1882), pp. 117, 228, 590-591.

[16] General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/38,39.

[17] MacGregor, The Land of Twelve Foot Davis, p. 311.

[18] J. Schrumm, "Valley of Gold" (Alberta History, Autumn 1974), p. 15.

[19] Ibid.

[20] See Chapter 3, pp. 111-116.

[21] Minutes of the Council of the Northern Department, July 1882. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 38/3.

[22] MacGregor, Paddle-Wheels to Bucket-Wheels on the Athabasca, pp. 94-95.

[23] Minutes of the Council of the Northern Department, July 1883. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 38/3.

[24] J.G. MacGregor, Paddle-Wheels to Bucket-Wheels on the Athabasca, pp. 88-90, 94.

[25] Ibid., p. 93.

[26] E.G. Mardon, Community Names of Alberta (Lethbridge, 1972), p. 70.

[27] J.G. MacGregor, A History of Alberta (Edmonton, 1972), p. 153.

[28] Father A. Tetreault, O.M.I. "Historic St. Albert (1883-1889)" (Alberta Historical Review, Autumn 1955), p. 19. See also Appendices 1 and 5 and Maps 2 to 4.

[29] Father A. Tetreault, O.M.I. "Historic St. Albert: Transformation and Highlights (1890-1954)" Alberta Historical Review, Winter 1957), p. 29. Also Maps 2 to 4.

[30] See Chapter 2, p. 75, and Maps 2 to 4.

[31] Tetreault, "Historic St. Albert (1883-1889)", p. 19.

[32] Mardon, Community Names of Alberta, p. 167.

[33] Barrhead and District Historical Society, Trails Northwest (Edmonton, 1967), pp. 49-51. See also Map 4.

[34] J.P. Turner, The North West Mounted Police 1873-1893, Vol. I. (Ottawa, 1950), pp. 178, 199, 206.

[35] Ibid., pp. 305-306.

[36] Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 379-380, 397, 411, 423, 430, 465, 532, 559-560.

[37] S.W. Horrall, The Pictorial History of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (Toronto, 1973), pp. 109-111.

[38] Pierre Berton, Klondike. Revised ed. (Toronto, 1972), p. 417.

[39] J.G. MacGregor The Klondike Rush Through Edmonton 1897-1898 (Toronto, 1970), p. 26.

[40] The Calgary and Edmonton Railway reached Strathcona, across the North Saskatchewan River from Edmonton in 1891. A.S. Morton, History of Prairie Settlement. The Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. II (Toronto, 1938), pp. 73, 90.

[41] Berton, Klondike, pp. 216-218, 220, 221, 225.

[42] Ibid., p. 221. Also MacGregor, The Klondike Rush Through Edmonton, p. 26.

[43] Berton, Klondike, p. 221. Also MacGregor, The Klondike Rush Through Edmonton, p. 45.

[44] MacGregor, The Klondike Rush Through Edmonton, p. vii. See also Map 4.

[45] Ibid., p. 85. Also Barrhead and District Historical Society, Trails Northwest (Edmonton, 1967), p. 49. Also interview with Mr. Dute Cartwright at Barrhead, May 7, 1976. Also Map 4.

[46] MacGregor, The Klondike Rush Through Edmonton, p. 51.

[47] Berton, Klondike, pp. 221-222.

[48] Frank Walker, "Overland Trail to the Klondike" (Alberta Historical Review, Winter 1959), pp. 1-2.

[49] Berton, Klondike, pp. 218, 224.

[50] William English, "Snowbound" (*Alberta Historical Review*, Spring 1962), p. 20.

[51] Berton, *Klondike*, p. 219.

[52] Quoted in the *Alberta Historical Review*, Spring 1958, p. 9.

[53] John F. McDougall, "John A. McDougall, Trader" (*Alberta Historical Review*, Summer 1960), p. 24.

[54] MacGregor, *The Klondike Rush Through Edmonton*, p. 39.

[55] See Appendices 1 and 5.

[56] Berton, *Klondike*, pp. 391-393.

[57] "Trip to Jasper", an extract from the *Edmonton Bulletin* of November 13, 1899 published in the *Alberta Historical Review*, Summer 1963, p. 19.

[58] See Chapter 2, p. 64.

[59] Barrhead and District Historical Society, *Trails Northwest*, pp. 25, 30-31, 49.

[60] E.G. Mardon, *Community Names of Alberta*, pp. 32-33.

[61] Barrhead and District Historical Society, *Trails Northwest*, pp. 54-55, 65, 68, 83, 96, 136, 187, 197-198, 219, 238-240, 257. Also Map 4.

[62] Township Plans map collection, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

[63] Surveyor's Field Notebook 10888. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. Files 1817087, 1817089, 1817091, 1817093, roll 2879.

[66] Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. Files 1771443, 1771445, 1771447, roll 2865.

[67] Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. Files 1817095, 1817097, roll 2879; file 1997539, roll 2156.

[68] Soil Rating Map of the Whitecourt-Barrhead Area, Alberta. 83J-S1/2. Contained in A. Wynnyk, J.D. Lindsay, Wm. Odynsky, *Soil Survey of the Whitecourt and Barrhead Area*. Alberta Soil Survey Report No. 27. (Canada, Department of Agriculture, 1969).

[69] Barrhead and District Historical Society, *Trails Northwest*, pp. 291-292, 294. See also Map 5.

[70] See Appendix 6 and Map 4.

[71] Ibid., p. 285. Also Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 1506307, roll 3794. See also Surveyor's Field Notebook 9918. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta which shows the ferry in 1907 crossing the Athabasca River at a point in the northeast quarter-section of section 31, township 61, range five, west of the fifth. This is the same location as is shown on Map 4.

[72] Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. Files 2141454, 2140621, roll 2934; file 1626183, roll 2811.

[73] Barrhead and District Historical Society, *Trails Northwest*, pp. 286-287. Also General Township Register, 61-5-W5, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession number 75.93/38. Also Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 1506307, roll 2794; files 1626181, 1626164, roll 2811.

[74] Ibid. Also see note 72.

[75] Soil Rating Map of the Whitecourt-Barrhead Area, Alberta.

[76] H.A. Dempsey, "The Indians of Alberta", pp. 3-4.

[77] A.S. Morton, *History of Prairie Settlement*, pp. 65, 69, 72-73.

[78] R.C. Brown and R. Cook, *Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed*. The Canadian Centenary Series, Vol. XIV. (Toronto, 1974), pp. 54-67.

[79] H.M. Troper, *Only Farmers Need Apply* (Toronto, 1972), pp. 2-6. Also M.L. Hansen and J.B. Brebner, *The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples* (New Haven, 1940, pp. 219-234.

[80] A.S. Morton, *History of Prairie Settlement*, p. 90.

[81] Barrhead and District Historical Society, Trails Northwest, p. 65.

[82] Surveyor's Field Notebook 10888. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta.

[83] A.S. Morton, History of Prairie Settlement, pp. 121-124.

[84] Surveyor's Field Notebook 8813. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta.

[85] See Appendix 6.

[86] Surveyor's Field Notebook 10888. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta. Also Chapter 2, pp. 53-54 and Chapter 3, p. 104.

Chapter 5

Fort Assiniboine 1909-1914: Consolidation of Settlement

During 1909 the first homesteads were filed on township 62, range six, west of the fifth meridian, the township in which the fort site was situated. As discussed in the last chapter, the period of time from the closure of the post to 1908 saw the first squatters come to the Fort Assiniboine area, some few years after the Klondike gold rush brought the old trail from Edmonton and the Fort Assiniboine district back into prominence. The years from 1877 to 1908 are those in which the settlement of the Fort Assiniboine area can be said to have begun; the years from 1909 to 1914 saw the consolidation and expansion of settlement, and the beginnings of community services such as post offices, stores, and resident physicians. The route from Edmonton by the old trail continued in use during this period. Also, the relationship of Edmonton as a depot and service center for Fort Assiniboine which had been set up during the fur trade era came back into effect. These were the elements of continuity between the fur trade and settlement periods in the case of Fort Assiniboine.

Only a few squatters and several homesteaders constituted the population of the Fort Assiniboine area in 1908.[1] By 1914 settlement had expanded considerably. This development will be considered here in two respects: the agricultural settlement process; and the development of the community and community services.

The area to be considered here as the "Fort Assiniboine area" consists of the following townships, all west of the fifth meridian: townships 61, 62, and 63, ranges five, six, and seven. This region, shown in Map 5, is an area eighteen miles square containing the community of Fort Assiniboine, its tributary communities Holmes Crossing, Freeman River, Topland, and Klondike City, and eight townships adjacent to that containing Fort Assiniboine and Freeman River. The first topic for discussion is the spread of agricultural settlement in this region.

The analysis of this process begins with the lower right-hand township of the area depicted in Map 5, township 61, range five, west of the fifth. This township was the first to be settled in the area, with the first homesteads being filed in 1907 and several in 1908, as discussed in the previous chapter.[2] From the illustration of land taken up by 1914 shown on Map 6, it is evident that the majority of pioneers settled close to the ferry across the Athabasca River in section 31, and only later (1913) moved to locations farther away within the township. A post office named "Holmes Crossing" after its postmaster and ferryman, William B. Holmes was established in the postmaster's house on the southeast quarter-section of section 31 of this township,[3] in 1910.[4] In 1913 Mr. Holmes also bought the quarter-section upon which the ferry was situated.[5] Thus settlement also centered around this post office. During the period 1909-1914, the two middle years, saw the greatest amount of land taken up. Fifteen quarter-sections of land were occupied; only 10 quarter-sections were taken up during the years 1909, 1910, 1913, and 1914 combined. Of the total number of 25 entries in the general township register on land in this township during the period in question, 18 were homesteads; only seven quarter-sections were taken up by NWHB (North-West Half Breed) scrip or South African Veterans' scrip.[6] North-West Half-Breed scrip was land granted to persons of mixed blood as provided by the Indian treaties. South African Veterans' scrip, issued by virtue of the Volunteer Bounty Act of 1908 to volunteers in the South African War consisted of two adjoining quarter-sections of Dominion Lands. Standard homestead duties were necessary but without the entry fee. This was transferrable, and often South African Veterans' scrip were bought up by speculators.[7]

There was a considerable degree of cancellation of homesteads in the area during this period. In Map 6, the quarter-sections with an entry subsequent to the first one had an entry cancelled; the first entry was cancelled before 1914 and in these cases a second entry was filed on the land. For example, a homestead was filed on the northwest quarter-section of section 28 in 1910 by Frank Tallman; this was cancelled and Stoney Davidson filed a homestead on the property in 1911.[8] In some cases as with the northeast quarter-section of section 19 the entry was cancelled

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without another one being made in this period.[9] Nine entries, including some made prior to 1909, were cancelled out of a total of 31 for all years (1907-1914). In other words, 29 per cent of all entries, homestead and otherwise during these years, had been cancelled by 1914. Thus during the period 1909-1914 settlement on the Holmes Crossing township expanded from that personified by the pioneers who had squatted in the early years of the twentieth century and who had begun the process of obtaining legal title once the township had been surveyed for homesteading.

The next township to the north, 62, range five, west of the fifth, saw a smaller amount of settlement, with only 16 homesteads being filed in the 1909-1914 period. It had been surveyed for settlement in the winter of 1908-09, but there were no entries at all until 1911, with the busiest years being 1912-1914, when 15 homesteads were entered.[10] Settlement was mostly limited to the southwest area, with only five homesteads entered, all in 1914, on land in the northern half of the township. Only two entries were cancelled, 12.5 per cent of the total number.[11] Moving north again, township 63, range five, west of the fifth was very sparsely settled during this 1909-1914 period. It was not surveyed for settlement until 1912; two homesteads were filed in 1913 and three in 1914, mostly on the eastern end of the township.[12] This area, which had been situated on the part of the Klondike Trail leading from Fort

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Assiniboine to Lesser Slave Lake,[13] was named "Klondike City" by these early settlers after a collection of cabins which existed on the northeast quarter-section of section 13. This name was derived from the local belief that a party heading for the Yukon had wintered there during the Klondike gold rush.[14] Another interpretation, however, is possible. These buildings were identified by the surveyor C.C. Fairchild in 1912 as the cache, a collection of Indian cabins, situated on the Klondike Trail. Fairchild's supply freighters pulled his supplies as far as this point using the old trail.[15] J.G. MacGregor feels that the surveyor's assessment is the correct one;[16] it seems to me that either explanation could be correct.

Township 61, range six, west of the fifth was surveyed for settlement in 1908[17] and the first homesteads were filed on it in 1909. One quarter-section was taken up by mixed-blood scrip as well during that year.[18] This property, originally granted in north and south halves to William Gardiner and Agnes Henri respectively, was in 1910 transferred to, or bought up by, one Jonathan Henderson of Edmonton.[19] The homestead file concerned does not definitely ascertain that the two persons above who first received the grant were of mixed blood, but it is possible that this incident provides an example of a white person acting as a speculator in buying up mixed-blood scrip. This township, immediately south of the one containing Fort Assiniboine, received a small but steady stream of

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settlement, with four entries being made in 1909. Four were made in 1910 and four in 1911, rising to a high of six in 1912. In 1913 only one entry was made, a homestead, and no entries were made in 1914.[20] Settlement was concentrated in the northwest corner of the township, with some settlement of the northeast corner. Six entries were cancelled out of a total of 20; thus 30 per cent of the entries made in the years 1909-1914 were cancelled. Two of the homesteads filed in 1909 were by men who had squatted on the land prior to survey. John Baston lived on the northwest quarter-section of section 34 from April 14, 1906 to March 1908, when he moved to the northeast quarter-section of this section. He filed a homestead on this piece of land on November 4, 1909 at the Dominion Lands sub-agency at Belvedere. Baston by November of 1909 had built a house, and had broken and cropped four acres;[21] thus, by the time of the beginning of homesteading in 1909, some permanent settlement had already occurred. The second squatter/homesteader was Charles Combes, who began continuous residence on the northwest quarter-section of section 35 on July 30, 1908, and filed a homestead on this property on January 20, 1910 at the Belvedere sub-agency.[22] Generally speaking, it can be seen from the foregoing discussion that settlement in this township during the years 1909-1914 was sparse and, given the 30 per cent cancellation rate of entries, rather difficult.

Township 62, range six, west of the fifth, was heavily

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settled during the period in question. Only parts of the northeast and southwest areas of the township, with a few scattered quarter-sections were left unsettled at the end of 1914. Although the vast majority of entries were homesteads, there were a number of instances of individuals securing land by purchase, or mixed-blood or South African Veterans' scrip. Twelve entries were recorded in 1909 and nine in 1910, and then a heavier influx of settlers began; 35 entries in 1911, and 30 entries in 1912. Then the pace of immigration into the area slackened, with ten entries in 1913 and only two in 1914. The first entries were filed in 1909[23] on the open hay lands on the banks of the Athabasca River in sections two, and three. These lands were taken up as homesteads, and by purchase by the squatters mentioned by the surveyor, C.C. Fairchild.[24] W.B. Combes, for example, who filed a homestead at the Dominion Lands office at Edmonton on November 27, 1909, on the southwest quarter-section of section two, had been in continuous residence there since August 1, 1908.[25] This was four months prior to the beginning of Fairchild's survey of the township for settlement.[26] Thereafter settlement moved north; most of the entries on the northern half of the township were made after 1910.[27] The site of the old post, identified by C.C. Fairchild in his survey as a point in the southwest quarter-section of section one, on the north bank of the river, 5.58 chains south and 8.00 chains east of the quarter-section monument on the east

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boundary of section two, was never homesteaded in this period but was purchased by J.E. State in 1917.[28] A 1910 Topographical Surveys Branch map of the area shows the site in this location beside the Fort Assiniboine post office on the southeast quarter-section of section two of this township.[29]

Once again the rate of cancellation of entries during the years 1909-1914 is considerable; 25 entries out of a total of 98 were cancelled,[30] giving a cancellation rate of approximately 29 per cent. Thus a considerable number of people in these early years abandoned the arduous process of securing title to their land.

Township 63, range six, west of the fifth, was only sparsely settled in the years 1909-1914, not being surveyed for settlement until 1912.[31] Nine homesteads were filed each in 1913 and 1914, concentrated in the southern half of the township. Two entries out of the nine were cancelled, thus giving a cancellation rate of 22 per cent. These two entries were made in 1913 and had been cancelled by the next year,[32] however, and thus the homesteaders concerned gave up their project very quickly.

Township 61, range seven, west of the fifth was very sparsely settled. Although surveyed for settlement in 1908,[33] settlement was slow to come. One homestead was filed in 1911, and seven more in 1913. There were no other entries, and none of those made were cancelled.[34]

Township 62, range seven, west of the fifth, which

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had been surveyed during the winter of 1908-09,[35] received its first entries in November 1909 in the form of a South African Veterans' Bounty grant of two quarter-sections to Ernest Sloman.[36] Settlement then spread mostly across the eastern end of the township and in particular the south-east corner. Homesteads and South African Veterans' scrip were present but no purchases or mixed-blood scrip. In 1909 and 1910 only two and eight entries were made respectively; 1911 and 1912 were the important years for immigration, with 20 and 26 entries respectively. No entries were made in 1913, and only four were made in 1914.[37] Thus the middle years, 1911 and 1912, of the period in question in this chapter saw the greatest amount of land taken up. Eighteen entries were cancelled out of a total of 58;[38] thus the cancellation rate during the years 1909-1914 on entries of land in this township was approximately 25 per cent, once again a considerable figure.

The last township to be considered here is township 63, range seven, west of the fifth which was not surveyed for settlement until 1915.[39] The surveyor in his report did not mention any squatters there before or at the time of survey and of course there were no entries in the general township register for the years prior to 1914,[40] so it must be presumed that no settlement occurred on that township during the period in question in this chapter.

A comparative view of the spread of settlement over the nine townships under analysis can be obtained by a summary of the statistics contained in Appendix 7 and the series of maps (Maps 6-13) showing entries plotted on the townships. The years when the largest number of entries were made and thus the greatest amount of land taken up were 1911 and 1912. In terms of the spread of settlement by area, the township containing the communities Fort Assiniboine and Freeman River was the most heavily settled, followed respectively by the townships containing the communities of Topland and Holmes Crossing. The other townships were more sparsely settled. Thus settlement by 1914 radiated outwards from the Fort Assiniboine township like the spokes of a wheel from a hub. This relationship also held true in terms of community development and organization, a phenomenon which will be discussed in due course. This analysis by area does not negate the truth of the fact that homesteads were first filed on the township containing Holmes Crossing, township 61, range 6, west of the fifth in 1907. However, there had been squatters on both this township and the one containing Fort Assiniboine in May 1905.[41]

There is no doubt that the the type of land concerned, in terms of fertility was partially responsible for the selection of land taken up during the 1909-1914 period. Settlement was concentrated on townships 62, ranges six, and seven, west of the fifth, where there was the greatest amount of fair to fairly good arable soil. On the latter there was some fairly good to good arable soil, the best grade in the district. For the most part settlers, when filing applications for homestead or other entry on land, tended to avoid the poorer grades of soil in the area; these were poor to fair arable soil, and soil good only as pasture and woodland. Township 63, range seven, west of the fifth, contained large areas of these types of soil and no squatting occurred on it during these years. Township 62, range five, west of the fifth and township 61, range six, west of the fifth were mostly pasture and woodland soil and were sparsely settled. Townships 61, ranges five and seven, and township 63, range six, west of the fifth contained less pasture and woodland soil but were also sparsely settled. Township 63, range five, west of the fifth, contained much pasture and woodland, poor to fair arable, and fair to fairly good arable soils, and a small pocket of fairly good to good arable soil, the best variety found in the district. This township was also sparsely settled. In this case the general rule of settlers selecting the better land, which prevailed in the other townships, did not completely follow; homesteads were filed on land which was fair to fairly good arable soil rather than on the fairly good to good arable soil, a better grade.[42] In general, however, for the whole district, settlement was concentrated on the better soils available, especially the grades of fair to fairly good arable and fairly good to good arable, avoiding the pasture and woodland and poor to fair arable soils. This discussion also shows the varied nature of the soils in the district.

The agricultural economy which arose as a result of this settlement was definitely a marginal one. During the period 1909-1914 the farms which were established were very small in terms of broken and cultivated acreage. Lewis McDonald, for example, filed a homestead on the southeast quarter-section of section 28 of township 62, range six, west of the fifth on September 6, 1911. In 1912 he broke one acre and cultivated it, probably as a garden. In 1913 he broke five more acres and cultivated them and in 1914 he broke ten acres and cultivated them. Thus by 1914 he had cleared and broken a total of 16 acres, 10 per cent of his homestead. As for cattle and horses, he had no stock during these years.[43] John Baston squatted on the northeast quarter-section of section 34, township 61, range six, west of the fifth in 1908 and had broken one acre that year, probably for a garden. By 1912 inclusive, Baston had only broken and cleared 31 acres out of his quarter-section, with only 26½ acres under cultivation. In 1910 Baston had seven head of cattle and two horses, these probably being his working team.[44]

The farm buildings which were constructed by the settlers during the years 1909-1914 were mostly of logs. Ferdie La Berge, who filed a homestead at the Belvedere Dominion Lands sub-agency on April 29, 1912 on the northeast quarter-section of section 33, township 62, range six, west of the fifth, began continuous residence on his homestead on June 15, 1912. He built a log house which measured 16 feet in width and 18 feet in length, a log barn of the same proportions, and a well.[45] Some buildings were of logs and cut lumber combined, as in the case of the 14 by 16 foot house built in 1911 by Mack R. Kempher on his homestead, the southwest quarter-section of section 14, township 62, range six, west of the fifth. Fencing was a combination of rails and barbed wire.[46] Stables for horses and cows and chicken houses were also constructed.[47] Water was plentiful; people got drinking water from wells or streams and used river water from the Athabasca or Freeman Rivers for watering gardens or washing.[48] Thus in this pioneer area a marginal agricultural economy grew up, with very small farms, log buildings, and wells and streams as water sources. Such luxuries as indoor plumbing and electricity were unheard of.

The marginal nature of the agricultural economy in the Fort Assiniboine area was in great measure due to the topographical nature of the region. It is on the borderline of the parkland and boreal forest; in many parts the land was well-timbered and the soil was of the acidic gray wooded type, not the best for grain-growing.[49] The gray timbered soils in this area were mixed with fertile black loam soils on open hay lands, such as those noted in sections one, two, and three of township 62, range six, west of the fifth, by surveyor C.C. Fairchild in 1908-09. Squatters had settled on these lands during the preceding years rather than on land in the rest of the township, which was quite well-timbered. These open hay lands contained fertile alluvial soil. In the other ares of the township fertile land was also available; on section 23 there was eight inches of black loam topsoil. However, this topsoil shared the section with muskeg.[50] Thus the Fort Assiniboine area was not of uniform fertility or ease of cultivation; some areas had good soil and were open, but many had heavy timber cover which was difficult to clear, as witnessed by the small amount of acreage cleared by 1914 in the examples discussed above, and soil of marginal fertility. This mixture of soils of different qualities has already been discussed in terms of its effect on the pattern of settlement of the area.[51]

This combination of fertile and less fertile soils, the presence of muskegs, and the difficulty and slowness of clearing the land of timber and brush, and the shortage of frost-free days in the growing season,[52] resulted in the emergence of a marginal agricultural economy based on mixed farming rather than on straight grain farming or stock raising. A homesteader or family could not live solely on the receipts of grain grown on the small parcels of cleared land which were the rule during these years, nor on the small receipts which would have been gleaned from cattle raised solely on grazing land in the bush or on the few open hay lands. Although some good wheat crops were harvested on townships 62, ranges six and seven, west of the fifth, and some of the land was deemed by surveyors as suitable for agriculture proper, mixed farming in which people grew grains such as oats mainly for livestock fodder, was the rule in this area.[53] The suitability of much of the area for this type of agriculture was noted by surveyors[54] and in applications for patent by some of the homesteaders.[55] The forest region exemplified by the Fort Assiniboine district, was an area of small farms raising especially oats and livestock.[56]

One of the most important causes of the marginal quality of the agricultural economy in the Fort Assiniboine area and the dominance of mixed farming was the state of transport and communications during these years. The only connections the area had with the outside world, were the Klondike or old fur trade trail, and a route across country to the nearest railway point, which led to Edmonton. During the years 1909-1914 the Fort Assiniboine area was many miles from a railway point; it therefore lacked good access to an all-weather transportation system which could have stimulated growth of a more consolidated agricultural economy.

Many of the settlers came to this area from Edmonton by the Klondike Trail. This route was noted by the surveyors at the time the area was surveyed into sections; C.C. Fairchild, for example, remarked in his report on the December 1908-February 1909 survey of township 62, range six, west of the fifth that this township was reached by the Chalmers or Klondike Trail. The trail was no more reliable and just as troublesome in 1909 as it had been in fur trade times; Fairchild noted that it was good in winter, when the ground was hard, but nearly impassable in the summer. When he surveyed township 63, range five, west of the fifth in 1912 Fairchild noted that part of the trail which ran through this township was unused as it was blocked with fallen timber.[57] Obviously the trail was not an ideal one for hauling produce to market, because of the difficulties of using it. It did serve, however, as the incoming route for many of the settlers during the period 1909-1914. David C. Thomson, who took up three quarter-sections of section 30, township 62, range six, west of the fifth by homestead and South African Veterans' Bounty in 1911, arrived in the area from Edmonton by the Klondike Trail.[58] This was also used by George Wesley Cartwright, who arrived with his family in the area in 1911 by team and sleigh from Edmonton; he trapped and homesteaded in the region for some years and later became the ferryman at Holmes Crossing. Cartwright had as a guide the Mikel Carroll who filed a homestead in 1910 on the southwest quarter-section of section three, township 62, range six, west of the fifth.[59] Raymond Olson, as a boy of six, came to Fort Assiniboine by the old trail in February 1910 with his family.[60] Thus the old trail to Edmonton was used by the early settlers.

The old trail was not, however, the only route between Fort Assiniboine and Edmonton to be used by incoming settlers. A route was developing which led from Edmonton to the farthest railway point north from there, such as Morinville and Clyde and then west through Westlock to the Fort Assiniboine area. The Canadian Northern Railway's line to Morinville was opened in October 1906 and the station at Clyde, north of Morinville on the Athabasca Landing branch (the Edmonton and Slave Lake Railway) was open for business in August, 1912.[61] The Edmonton, Dunvegan, and British Columbia Railway arrived at Westlock in 1913.[62] Thus during the period in question a route developed which provided an alternative to the Klondike Trail, and settlers used it. Mr. and Mrs. Leo La Berge came from Edmonton to Fort Assiniboine by this route in May 1912 from Reliance, South Dakota. Bringing horses and farm equipment with them they came to Morinville by train and travelled the rest of the way by team and wagon. Mr. La Berge obtained homestead entry on the northwest quarter-section of section 34 of township 62, range six, west of the fifth on May 14, 1912.[63] James Roach from Perth, Ontario was on his way to Athabasca Landing and a homestead in the Peace River Country in 1914 when he took a wrong left turn at Clyde and arrived at Fort Assiniboine. Talked into staying by Walter J.C. Thomson, a local settler, he obtained homestead entry on the northwest quarter-section of section 18, township 61, range five, west of the fifth on April 30, 1914.[64] Settlers also used the route to haul what grain and livestock they had to sell to the railhead at Westlock, a distance by road of

60 miles.[65] On this route roads were built to connect with the railhead; in 1912 the provincial government was building a road from Clyde to Holmes Crossing, which was graded to within 15 miles of the latter.[66] Thus a route developed during these years as an alternative to the Klondike Trail, giving the Fort Assiniboine area two methods of access to Edmonton, the major centre of northern Alberta. However, the problems contained within this system still helped to make the agricultural economy of the Fort Assiniboine area a marginal one.

The Klondike Trail provided a route in and out of the area but not a good route, for it retained the problems it had presented during the fur trade era; soft and nearly impassable when muddy and blocked with fallen timber. Block and tackle had to be carried when using the trail to extricate the wagon from the muskegs and mudholes which were encountered.[67] The road to the east and railway to Edmonton was a better route, but at its closest point, Westlock, the railhead was still 60 miles away. The road between the railhead and Fort Assiniboine was partly graded, but the graded portion did not arrive at even Holmes Crossing until 1915 and did not cover the north side of the river until several years later.[68] The absence of a close railway connection or good roads to an outside market (i.e. Edmonton) meant that the agricultural products people raised would have been largely sold, if at all, in the immediate area of production. However, in this case most of the local area's residents were also farmers who produced their own grain and livestock. Thus the pattern of agriculture at Fort Assiniboine during these early years of settlement was one of marginal production due to the condition of the land and soil and the lack of easy and cheap access to close markets for produce. A close railway connection, in the form of Barrhead, 25 miles away would not come until 1927.[69] Mixed farming, which produced both food and produce for possible sale, became the rule, with some surplus produce sold locally.[70] Any produce shipped to outside markets was often hogs or cattle, which were more able to stand the cost of transport. W.A. Mackintosh's maxim that areas more than ten miles from a railway are not characteristically grain-shipping districts[71] certainly was true for the Fort Assiniboine area during the period 1909-1914.

The practice by the settlers of taking other employment while in the process of "proving up" on their homesteads was both a cause and effect of the prevalent marginal agricultural economy of the time. Since a man could not in many cases support himself or his family solely on the proceeds of his agricultural endeavours he would find work for part of the year and complete the required annual six months' residence on his homestead during the rest of the year.[72] Because he spent this time away from farm work it took just that much longer to clear or break the land and get the maximum amount of land into agricultural production. The result was that once again, since the homestead did not provide all the necessary sustenance, he would have to find outside work. Henry T. Slaughter, the negro who lived in the township containing the ferry and community of Holmes Crossing, walked out to Edmonton to get work for part of the year and then returned to put in his six months' residence on his homestead.[73] Leo La Berge worked on harvesting crews in the Westlock area each autumn.[74] Trapping was another vocation followed by some homesteaders in order to add to the meagre receipts from farming.[75] Logging, was just beginning to be an important industry to the homesteader as alternative employment during these early years from 1909-1914. In 1913 logs were being cut downriver at the site of the Klondike gold rush ferry[76] and in 1914 further upriver near the site of Fort Assiniboine. In the logging camps men would cut and pile timber all winter, and when the ice melted in the Athabasca River the logs would be put in the river and driven downstream to a sawmill at Chisholm Mills, headquarters of the Chisholm Lumber Company. The station of Chisholm on the Edmonton, Dunvegan, and British Columbia railway was opened in 1914. Many of the local homesteaders worked in these lumber camps.[77] Logging and trapping provided remunerative work during the winter months to augment proceeds from any grain and livestock sold through the winter.[78] Thus these industries were very important to the settlers.

The life of a homesteader was an arduous one, with heavy and continuous labour involved in building a house, clearing, breaking, and farming the land, and working at other jobs as well to support oneself. It is no surprise that a sizeable number abandoned the enterprise; approximately one-fifth of the entries on land made during the period under discussion here were cancelled.[79] Some gave up very soon. John Forrester and his son David, who had homesteaded the northeast quarter-section of section five and the southwest quarter-section of section four respectively of township 62, range seven, west of the fifth in April 1911, abandoned their homesteads only four months later in August 1911 because of the land's unsuitability for cultivation as a result of the excess muskeg and water on it.[80] The lack of a close rail connection and financial problems also caused some people to lose heart; Carl Hendriks abandoned his homestead on the northeast quarter-section of section 34, township 61, range six, west of the fifth in April 1910. He had not been able to raise sufficient funds over the winter to keep him on the homestead over the spring, summer, and harvest season and it was too far from a railway to make farming financially feasible.[81] The heavy tree cover on much of the Fort Assiniboine area and the cost of clearing it also discouraged homesteaders; Syver Ronningen abandoned his homestead on the northeast quarter-section of section 31 on the same township in 1910 because there was too much timber on it.[82] Not all of the settlers, obviously, were suited to the sort of endeavour which pioneering in this area required.

During the period 1909-1914 the first elements of community services made their appearance in the Fort Assiniboine area. The first of these was the extension of postal service with the establishment of local post offices. A post office was established at Holmes Crossing in 1910, with W.B. Holmes as postmaster. The post office was located on his land, the southeast quarter-section of section 31, township 61, range five, west of the fifth. A post office was also open at Fort Assiniboine in 1910, on the southeast quarter-section of section two township 62, range six, west of the fifth. Joseph Brewster was the postmaster.[83] A post office was established in the community of Freeman River, northwest of Fort Assiniboine on section 25, township 62, range seven, west of the fifth in 1912, with Miss B.H. Thomson as postmistress.[84] James L. Walsh was the next postmaster at Fort Assiniboine, in 1912; the post office was on his land in the southeast quarter-section of section two, township 62, range six, west of the fifth.[85] These post offices were located in the houses of the settlers who took on the job of postmaster. The closest post office previous to these local ones was Mellowdale, opened in 1909.[86]

Settlers' children during this period suffered from a lack of educational facilities; no schoolhouse was present in the district until 1912. Fort Assiniboine School

District Number 2784 was established on July 25, 1912, with Ben Christianson as senior trustee. A one-room log schoolhouse was built on a two-acre parcel on top of the hill behind the river flat at Fort Assiniboine, on the southeast quarter-section of section eleven, township 62, range six, west of the fifth.[87] Eleven months later, the Freeman River School District Number 2983 was established, on June 10, 1913, and a schoolhouse was built on the northwest quarter-section of section 20 of the same township.[88] These two schools were the first, and only ones in the district for the years with which this thesis is concerned. Thus grades one to eight were available to children; however, educational opportunity was still lacking, for two reasons. The Fort Assiniboine area during these early years was on the fringe of settlement; beyond it stretched the Swan Hills, a vast uninhabited forest area.[89] In these fringe communities high schools were characteristically far away, and in this respect Fort Assiniboine was no exception. No high school classes were offered at Fort Assiniboine and Freeman River schools; prospective students would have had to travel to outside centers such as Edmonton,[90] a procedure too expensive for families living on a marginal farm income and whatever receipts could be gathered from other jobs. Secondly, the schooling offered by the schools which did exist did not cover a ten-month term; its duration was dependent on a government grant for a teacher's salary and, when that ran out, whatever local tax money could be obtained. Often school terms lasted for only a few months; short-term schools were common in Alberta during the 1911-1921 period.[91] Thus the children suffered from a lack of high school existence and lower grade consolidation. Educational services in this area during the period in question were, like the local form of agriculture, of a marginal nature.

It can be seen at this point that of the five communities in question here - Fort Assiniboine, Holmes Crossing, Freeman River, Topland, and Klondike City - three were post offices (Fort Assiniboine, Holmes Crossing, Freeman River) and two of these had schools (Fort Assiniboine and Freeman River). In addition, the only ferry across the Athabasca River and thus the central method of access to Westlock, Edmonton, etc. was located at Holmes Crossing. Therefore, three of these communities contained services essential to the farming population of the district and developed during these years as such. Fort Assiniboine was the main centre for the communities north of the Athabasca River (Klondike City, Freeman River, and Topland) and also for Holmes Crossing, as this place had no school. The other two communities, Topland and Klondike City, were merely named areas of farming populations rather than communities of farmers with community services of post offices, schools, or ferries. Klondike City was named for the collection of shacks or cabins on the northeast quarter-section of section 13, township 63, range five, west of the fifth.[92] Topland, a community roughly in township 62, range seven, west of the fifth, was named for its situation on the divide separating the valleys of the Athabasca and Freeman Rivers.[93] Thus during the years 1909-1914 three of the five communities in question developed into centers providing post offices, schools, and a ferry to the surrounding farming population. What other services were provided?

At Fort Assiniboine, a blacksmith shop and general store were opened in 1914 by F. D. Armitage and Henry Whitlege respectively.[94] It is possible that this blacksmith shop was the one situated on the site of the future Fort Assiniboine settlement, on the southwest and northwest quarter-sections of section one, township 62, range six, west of the fifth.[95] These buildings were probably the beginning of the village of Fort Assiniboine on its modern site as no other village buildings were there before about 1915 or 1916. Some small trading posts or quasi-general stores had been operated between 1909 and 1914 by local homesteaders Robert Clark and Joseph Brewster in sections two and 31 of this township.[96] A community hall was not built (probably on the settlement site) until 1915, so any dances, meetings etc. were held in the Fort Assiniboine schoolhouse, situated on section 11 of this township.[97] This arrangement was common in pioneer agricultural communities, where for years the first and only community building was the schoolhouse.[98] The

Freeman River schoolhouse was probably utilized in the same manner. Thus by 1914 there were a post office, school, a store, and a blacksmith's shop at Fort Assiniboine. What of churches?

The only location of any church services during these years was at Fort Assiniboine and possibly at Freeman River. In pioneer communities it was common for the all-important schoolhouse to also be used for church services,[99] and in this respect Fort Assiniboine and Freeman River were probably no exception. This at least served until a regular church was constructed towards the end of the period in question. Although the Methodist Church had a small property in the southeast quarter-section of section 10, township 62, range six, west of the fifth before 1912, this entry was cancelled.[100] An Anglican Church and cemetery plot were built in 1914 on land in the same quarter-section by Reverend W.L.S. Dallas who also established churches at Leighton, near Barrhead, and at Eastburg in the years just prior to the First World War. This land, on the hill behind the Fort Assiniboine river flat, was patented on September 16, 1916 as property of the diocese of Calgary of the Church of England.[101] This church seems to have served the needs of the Protestant population of the area, for numerous denominations attended the services there.[102] These services were probably irregular, as no regular minister was appointed. Salem S. Hardy, a local homesteader, was a lay minister and visiting preachers and student ministers came through the area.[103] Roman Catholics in the area were also, it seems, able to attend services towards the end of this period. Mass was held by visiting priests in the living room of James Walsh, the Fort Assiniboine postmaster. Walsh and his wife settled on their land, the southeast quarter-section of section two, township 62, range six, west of the fifth in January of 1912.[104] Thus churches and ordained services, if irregular, had come to the Fort Assiniboine area by 1914. However, for some of the years after 1909 the settlers were without any organized religious services whatsoever, as far as can be determined.

The Fort Assiniboine area was somewhat more fortunate in terms of availability of medical care than it was in terms of the availability of educational or religious services, for a medical doctor came to reside at Fort Assiniboine in 1911. This was Doctor Joseph Ephraim State, born in Ontario in 1869. Doctor State emigrated to the United States, and then in 1911 decided to return to Canada as a farmer. He acquired a South African Veteran's Bounty of ~~two~~ adjoining quarter-sections of Dominion Lands, free of entry fee, from John S. Robson of Bowden, Alberta and applied for entry of this grant on December 30, 1911. He applied it to the northwest quarter-section of section one and the southwest quarter-section of section twelve of the township containing Fort Assiniboine, township 62, range six, west of the fifth. He built a log and lumber house measuring 18 feet by 24 feet on the property in section one in April 1912 and resided on it during the following periods: June 14 to December 17, 1912; June 9 to December 13, 1913; and June 10 to December 30, 1914, the date of his application for patent of the land. Thus during the months above he resided in the district and rendered his professional services; although not a trained surgeon, he did some surgery. During the rest of the time in the years noted above, Doctor State attended to his medical practice in St. Louis, Missouri. In December 1914 Doctor State filed a homestead on the northwest quarter-section of section 13, township 63, range five, west of the fifth, in the Klondike City area. This was exchanged in January 1915 for the northwest quarter-section of section 12, township 62, range six, west of the fifth, adjoining his property to the south. In 1917 he completed the task of acquiring the southwest and northwest quarter-section of sections one and twelve of township 62, range six by buying the southwest quarter-section of section one,[105] on which was situated the old Hudson's Bay Company post site.[106] The community therefore had the services of a resident medical doctor during the months from June to December of 1912, 1913, and 1914. Doctor State was sometimes assisted by local people such as Mrs. May Blake Adkins or Miss B.H. Thomson, a nurse who took up all of section 25, township 62, range seven, west of the fifth, in 1911.[107] The community was fortunate in this presence of medical services, even if

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only for half a year.

Thus during the years 1909 to 1914 five communities grew up: Fort Assiniboine and Freeman River, which had post offices and schools; Holmes Crossing, which had a post office and ferry; and Topland and Klondike City, which were names only. In addition, Fort Assiniboine had church services, a doctor, a blacksmith, and a general store. It was the centre of this small district. How was this district of nine townships situated within the larger network of Edmonton and northern Alberta during these years?

The main center to which the Fort Assiniboine district was subsidiary was Edmonton.[108] Just as in fur trade times, Edmonton served as a general depot for Fort Assiniboine. In terms of services to settlers one of the most important services it provided to its satellite district was that of land registration facilities, at the Dominion Lands Office. Many of the people who took up land in the Fort Assiniboine district filed entry on homesteads or South African Veterans' Bounty land grants, and applications for patents of their property, at the Edmonton land office. Many examples of this are found in the homestead files of the Department of the Interior. Ben Christianson, an American farmer from Kintyre, North Dakota filed a homestead entry at Edmonton on September 15, 1911 on the southwest quarter-section of section 28, township 62, range six, west of the fifth.[109] John A. Miller, who had squatted on what was to be the northwest quarter-section of section three of the same township since August 1, 1908, filed an application for patent of this property at Edmonton on October 6, 1911.[110]

Edmonton was also a jumping-off point for settlers going to the Fort Assiniboine district. When Raymond Olson, as a boy of five, came to Canada with his mother and grandmother from North Dakota in the winter of 1909, they took the Canadian Pacific Railway to Edmonton and made a stop-over there. In February of 1910 they proceeded with team and sleigh to Fort Assiniboine, using the old fur trade or Klondike Trail.[111] Edmonton was also a jumping-off point for Fort Assiniboine in terms of other railways and the alternative route to the Klondike Trail. Miss Naomi La Berge came to Edmonton in 1912 with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Leo La Berge, from Reliance, South Dakota. After arriving at Edmonton, they took the Canadian Northern Railway to Morinville and from there covered the 100 miles to Fort Assiniboine by team.[112] Thus during these years the route north and west of Edmonton which would later develop into the route north to Clyde and west from there to Fort Assiniboine through Westlock was beginning to augment the direct route between Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine afforded by the Klondike Trail.

Part of the function of Edmonton as a jumping-off point for settlers was to outfit them; the department stores in the capital city, such as that of the Hudson's Bay Company[113] almost certainly did some business with the settlers passing through. The people of the Fort Assiniboine district also patronized these stores once they were established, as the local general store carried a limited stock of goods.[114]

Edmonton also served the district in terms of legal services and medical and dental care. The presence of Doctor State at Fort Assiniboine assured the people of some measure of medical care, but there were neither dentists nor hospitals in the immediate vicinity. Modern hospitals had been present in Edmonton since the building of the General Hospital by the Gray Nuns in 1895 and the first Misericordia hospital in 1905.[115] There were dentists in Edmonton, and lawyers as well.[116]

The Fort Assiniboine district also had a transport relationship with the three towns north of Edmonton which during the 1909-1914 period were the nearest railheads - Morinville, Clyde, and Westlock. The Canadian Northern Railways' Morinville branch was opened in October 1906, and during that summer the first grain elevator in town was constructed. Morinville also had a Dominion Lands sub-agency at which an entry on land was made by a resident of the Fort Assiniboine district.[117] This railway's station at Clyde was opened in 1912.[118] This was the real beginning of a definite route for people in the Fort Assiniboine area west to Clyde and then south to Edmonton. The distance to be travelled by trail was further shortened when the Edmonton, Dunvegan, and British Columbia Railway arrived at Westlock in 1913.[119] Thus, for the Fort Assiniboine district, the railhead to which any grain or livestock to be shipped to distant markets could be carried came progressively closer, from Morinville to Clyde to Westlock, during these early years. The return trip to Westlock, 60 miles away, by wagon with a load of grain or livestock took four days.[120] This was the closest railhead to the settlers for many years, for the Pembina Valley Railway from Edmonton to Barrhead, 25 miles to the southeast, did not come into operation until 1927.[121]

The last outside points which had relationships with Fort Assiniboine during this period were Mosside and Belvedere, two small post offices to the south.[122] Both of these points had Dominion Lands sub-agencies, at which settlers could file homestead entries on land, file applications for patent of land, file notices of abandonment of land, etc. This arrangement was much more convenient than going to Edmonton, far away over rough roads to railway points. Two examples of the many such occurrences will suffice. Joseph L. Clarke of the Freeman River district filed an application for homestead entry on the northwest quarter-section of section 36, township 62, range seven, west of the fifth on May 6, 1912 at the Belvedere Dominion Lands sub-agency. Doctor State filed his application for patent of his South African Veterans' Bounty scrip, on the southwest quarter-section of section 12 and the northwest quarter-section of section one of township 62, range six,

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west of the fifth, on December 30, 1914 at the Mosside sub-agency.[123]

The ethnic character of the Fort Assiniboine district during this 1909-1914 period was a varied one, according to the picture suggested by ethnic data in the pertinent land files of the Department of the Interior. Some of the files pertaining to certain entries are not available for perusal and thus the following analysis cannot be considered as complete for the area in question. However those files which are available often contain information relating to the ethnic or national origins of many of the settlers concerned and it is on this information that the analysis of the ethnic background, in terms of the birthplaces of the settlers, is based. The analysis here includes in the statistics the following persons: Joseph Brewster, William B. Combes, and Charles Combes, John Baston, Mikel Carroll, Martin Steinert, John Paynter, W.B. Holmes, Henry C. Faust, John A. Miller, and Marion Davis. These men squatted on their land before 1909 but filed homesteads on their land or otherwise filed for entry in the 1909-1914 period.[124] For this reason they will be included here although they came to the area before the rest of the settlers discussed here.

The dominant characteristic of the district in this regard was the fact that a very considerable percentage of the settlers were Americans. Of the 151 persons whose birthplaces are known, 86 were born in the United States. Twenty-three were born in the British Isles; 14 in the

Scandinavian countries, including Iceland; two each in Belgium, Germany, and the Bohemian region of Austria; and one each in Australia, Russia and Holland. Nineteen were Canadians, including some natives of mixed blood.[125] Thus a very considerable portion of the settlers of the Fort Assiniboine district were Americans, followed numerically by persons from the United Kingdom, Canada, the Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland), Belgium, Germany, Austria, Australia, Russia, and Holland. There is evidence to suggest that the type of country offered for settlement by the federal government in the Fort Assiniboine district was directly related to the type of settler, ethnically speaking, who took it. The area was well-timbered and very well watered; wood and water were in abundance. This appealed first of all to the people of Scandinavia, native to an area where woodcraft was well developed; many of those who came to the Canadian West settled in the forested areas, which were more familiar to them than treeless prairies.[126] Fourteen Scandinavians filed entry on land in the district under discussion here.[127]

The abundance of wood and water in the area also attracted many Americans from the states of North and South Dakota. Of the 157 persons who filed entry on land in the district between 1909 and 1914, 24 were farmers from one of these states. Although most were American-born, four - Syver Ronningen, Olaf Finstad, and A.B. Olson of Norway, and Niels Jensen of Denmark, were not.[128] There is evidence to suggest that some of these people saw the wooded, moist lands in the Fort Assiniboine district as a paradise compared to the dry, parched lands they were occupying at the time. This was true in the case of the family of Raymond Olson, born in Emmons County, North Dakota, in 1904. Drought had hit his home area, and wood and water were hard to find; his grandmother, Mrs. Rebecca Blake, and his stepfather and mother Mr. J. Adkins and Mrs. May Blake Adkins, came to Fort Assiniboine in 1910, where wood, water, and grass were abundant.[129] Wesley Cartwright emigrated to the Fort Assiniboine district in 1912 from his dried-out land in North Dakota, hoping to make a better living.[130]

Of the total of 86 native-born Americans who filed on land in the district between 1909 and 1914, 69 were born in the midwest or western states of Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Ohio, Minnesota, Indiana, Illinois, Oklahoma, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, and Washington. Only three came from the South (Mississippi and Kentucky) and nine from the eastern states, (Pennsylvania, New York, Massachusetts, and New Jersey.)[131] Thus most of the Americans who settled in the Fort Assiniboine district were from the western or midwestern states, although it must be granted that applicants were from varied areas of the United States.

Of the 19 persons born in Canada, however, who filed entry on land in the district during these years, ten were from Ontario, one from Quebec, one from New Brunswick, two

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from Alberta, three persons of mixed-blood of the Prairie Provinces, and one man from Manitoba. The birthplace of the last man was not given.[132] Thus, of the Canadians who filed entry on land in the Fort Assiniboine district during the period 1909-1914, the majority were easterners. This is an interesting contrast to the origins of the American settlers noted above.

An analysis of the previous occupations pursued by people who took up land in the district between 1909 and 1914 reveals that many were already farmers. Out of a total of 135 people whose previous occupations were declared by them, 88 were farmers. The remainder included: labourers; teamsters; clerks; machinists; carpenters; ranchers; railroad men; and real estate agents. There were also one each of the following: nurse; physician; baker; mason; cook; hotel owner; miner; trapper; hardware merchant; travelling salesman; and a financial broker.[133] Thus a fairly wide variety of professions, trades, and occupations was represented, but the vast majority of applicants for entry in this district were farmers. Moreover, many of these persons were not strangers to the Alberta landscape; 23 had been farmers in this province previous to applying for their homesteads or other land grants.[134] In terms of those who filed entry on land in the Fort Assiniboine district in the years from 1909 to 1914, settlement was a young bachelor's game. Of 151 applicants for entry whose marital status at time of entry is known, 109 were single, or more than two-thirds of the total. Only 42 of these people were married, including two women, Mrs. Rebecca Blake and Mrs. Agnes Henri. One woman, Miss Beatrice H. Thomson, was single. These were the only female applicants for entry. Of 112 persons whose age at time of entry was disclosed, 84 were between the ages of 18 and 39 years. Only 28 of the applicants for entry were 40 years of age or over, the oldest being 66. The high proportion of single settlers to married ones and males to females is also reflected in the 1911 census statistics in Appendix 10.[135]

Thus during the years 1909 to 1914 a considerable number of people took up land in the Fort Assiniboine district. Although about one-fifth of these people gave up the struggle to set up farms and "prove up" on their land,[136] many were successful. What was life like in the district during these years for the pioneering population?

Much use was made by the settlers of local resources. One of the most important examples of this was in terms of food; wild meat and berries were extensively used and formed an important part of the settlers' diet. Such animals as caribou, moose, deer, and rabbits and also partridges were hunted by the settlers. The Freeman River and the surrounding lakes also provided some jackfish.[137] It would seem that the deficiency of game which plagued the post in fur trade times did not recur during these years of the settlement era.[138] Much of the food which was not game was still domestically produced, such as potatoes, vegetables, dairy products, beef, pork and poultry. The general store supplied only such stores as coffee, sugar, salt, beans, and flour, which could not be produced by the individual homesteader.[139] Some clothes were bought at such places, but most were either made at home or ordered by catalogue from department stores. In the autumn winter clothes were often ordered by catalogue.[140]

Recreational activities in the Fort Assiniboine district were, like the diet, very much a home-grown affair. Such institutions as motion picture theatres, museums, and fine restaurants were simply not there; instead, people relaxed individually by reading such periodicals as the Country Guide. For common activities which brought people together, the populace relied on dances in the schoolhouses at Fort Assiniboine and Freeman River, picnics, games, footraces, housewarming parties and the annual celebration on Dominion Day.[141] A young traveller from Peace River Crossing named Edward H. Carrothers attended the Dominion Day celebration in 1911 at W.B. Holmes' cabin with him and the rest of the settlers.[142] The large number of American settlers resulted in the great popularity of baseball games as the main local form of recreation.[143] There was, however, little time for recreation.

A homesteader's life during these years was hard.

Land had to be cleared and broken, and cropped with horse-drawn machinery. People did not use tractor-driven farm machinery in this area until after 1920. For travelling from place to place, horse-drawn conveyances were also used; the first automobile did not arrive in the district until 1915. Horse-power was also used to thresh grain; one farmer had a horse treadmill which turned a flywheel which in turn powered the thresher.[144] In some cases oxen were used to pull ploughs and do farm work.[145] A busy time of the year was autumn, when the men of the district made up crews to thresh each other's crops.[146] When a homesteader had cultivated and harvested his crop, he would often work at a job away from home to make some more ready cash.[147]

Although the population of the district contained a number of groups of different national origin such as English, Irish, Scots, Germans, Scandinavians, Russians, Canadians, and Americans,[148] the district experienced no cultural ethnic events sponsored by the local groups.[149] The Fort Assiniboine district during these years seems to have been, for the most part, ethnically neutral. However, one occurrence shows that racial prejudice was present. W.C. McCartney and P.W. McCabe, who had filed homesteads on the south half of section 30, township 61, range five, west of the fifth, abandoned their land in May, 1910. Both cited, as reasons, their objections to the number of coloured people coming into the district. The only negro in this district, as far as can be discovered, was H.T. Slaughter of section 32 of the same township.[150] There was a negro settlement at Campsie about 12 miles to the south.[151] Thus racial prejudice was present in the district.

There was not very much of a native presence in the area during these years, although persons of mixed and full blood did inhabit and visit the area. Some mixed-blood scrip was taken up in the area, as in the case of Francois Poitras, who took up the southeast quarter-section of section four, township 62, range six, west of the fifth in December 1909 and sold it to William Humberstone of Edmonton the following May.[152] Edward L'Hirondelle, who was living in the area in 1908, may have continued to do so in the 1909-1914 period but this is not certain. He was perhaps a relative of the L'Hirondelle's in the Lac La Nonne area before 1900.[153] Some mixed-blood families with the surnames of Cardinal, Courtepatte, and Chalifoux were living in the area around 1918, but it is impossible to determine exactly when they came to this area and if this was during the 1909-1914 period. There were some Crees living around Fort Assiniboine and some Stonies (Assiniboines) further west;[154] these people were probably trappers. The most noticeable presence of Canadian Native peoples in the Fort Assiniboine district was at the time of the annual Indian pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Anne at Lac Ste. Anne, an event which had begun in 1889.[155] Each year numbers of Indians from the Lesser Slave Lake area would take the Klondike Trail to its junction with the trail to Lac Ste. Anne west and north of St. Albert; they would sometimes camp on the open flat at Fort Assiniboine, on sections one, two, and three of township 62, range six, west of the fifth.[156] It is fair to say, however, that the native presence in the Fort Assiniboine district was small, and it is extremely difficult to pinpoint its exact extent.

In terms of government services to the area, Fort Assiniboine did not receive a great deal. The most important services were the post offices and schools, the road which was being built west from Clyde in 1912, police, and the homestead inspector. The first two named above have already been discussed.[157] The Royal North-West Mounted Police were an important agency of aid to settlers during this period. A policeman would visit the Fort Assiniboine district periodically during these years, making sure that all was well with the settlers and supplying them sometimes with such needed articles as ammunition.[158] Finally there was the homestead inspector. This official came out to the district to check on applications for patent of land by homesteaders. Sometimes such applications would be sworn out before him, thus relieving the settler of the necessity of a trip to the Edmonton, Belvedere, or Mosside Dominion Lands agencies.[159] On January 19, 1912, for example, Henry T. Slaughter made an application for patent of the southeast quarter-section of section 32, township

61, range five, west of the fifth, before Gordon Macdonald, homestead inspector in the Edmonton district at Holmes Crossing.[160] The townships classified as the district of Fort Assiniboine for the purposes of this thesis were included in Improvement Districts 641, 611, and 612 when they were formed on December 18, 1913 by virtue of Order-in-Council 1104/13. These units remained unchanged throughout 1913 and 1914 and were in fact not changed until 1945.[161]

Thus the evolution of Fort Assiniboine from a small fur trade post to a district possessing a certain degree of settlement by 1914 was in a number of stages. Its role of a fur post was enlarged during the winter of 1824-25 to include the more important role of a transcontinental communications way station, and it continued in this manner until the spring of 1861. At this point its transcontinental significance ceased and it became a local way station within the Saskatchewan District. By 1877 this importance was gone as well and the life of Fort Assiniboine as a Hudson's Bay Company post was ended in that year. The area was then isolated and little visited until, with the Klondike gold rush in 1897, the value of the old trail as a route from Edmonton to the western end of Lesser Slave Lake and on to the Yukon was recognized, and it was revived. This brought Fort Assiniboine into a resurrected if temporary prominence, for the gold rush use of the trail lasted only for several years. Soon, however, settlers were moving into the area northwest of Edmonton, using the old trail to get to their destinations. By the winter of 1908-09, when the township containing Fort Assiniboine was surveyed for settlement, squatters had been living in the area for three years. Settlement of the area was beginning. The first homestead and scrip entries on land in the Fort Assiniboine township were filed in 1909, and the years from 1909 to 1914 mark the consolidation of the trickle of settlement begun between 1877 and 1908. Through these years the old trail remained a standard route to the main urban centre, Edmonton, and was only beginning to be replaced by railroads from Morinville, Clyde, and Westlock successively as a route to Edmonton by 1914. Thus it can be seen that the common characteristics of both fur trade and settlement periods were the trail to Edmonton and its relationship to Fort Assiniboine as a main depot and service centre. These two phenomena are the links of continuity between the two periods and it can therefore be affirmed that the relationship set up between Edmonton and Fort Assiniboine in 1824 was to continue, with certain interruptions, to 1914. A fur trade phenomenon set up under the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly continued into the settlement era, and thus in the case of Fort Assiniboine a certain continuity spanned both of the main periods of Western Canadian history.

Footnotes

[1] See Chapter 4, pp. 141-143.

[2] General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/38. Also Chapter 4, pp. 141-143.

[3] Ibid. Also Barrhead and District Historical Society, Trails Northwest, p. 285.

[4] Almanac of Canada, 1910, p. 215.

[5] General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/38.

[6] See Appendix 7 and Map 6.

[7] Chester Martin, Dominion Lands Policy. The Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. 2. (Toronto, 1938), pp. 238-239, 424-425.

[8] See Map 6. Also General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/38.

[9] See Map 6. Also Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 2817374, roll 2416.

[10] See Map 7, and Appendices 6 and 7.

[11] See Map 7 and Appendix 7.

[12] See Appendices 6 and 7 and Map 8.

[13] J.G. MacGregor, The Klondike Rush Through Edmonton 1897-1898 (Toronto, 1970), p. 180.

[14] Barrhead and District Historical Society, Trails Northwest, p. 294.

[15] Surveyor's Field Notebook 14333. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta.

[16] MacGregor, The Klondike Rush Through Edmonton, p. 180.

[17] See Appendix 6.

[18] See Appendix 7 and Map 9.

[19] See Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 1950746, roll 2138.

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[20] See Appendix 7 and Map 9.

[21] See Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 1997539, roll 2156, and file 1817095, roll 2879.

[22] Ibid., file 1817097, roll 2879.

[23] See Appendix 7 and Map 10.

[24] Surveyor's Field Notebook 10888. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta.

[25] Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 1817091, roll 2879.

[26] See Appendix 6.

[27] See Map 10.

[28] Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 2582075, roll 3014; file 3879477, roll 2480.

[29] See Map 4.

[30] See Appendix 7 and Map 10.

[31] See Appendix 6.

[32] See Appendix 7 and Map 11.

[33] See Appendix 6.

[34] See Appendix 7 and Map 12.

[35] See Appendix 6.

[36] General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/40.

[37] See Appendix 7 and Map 13.

[38] Ibid.

[39] See Appendix 6.

[40] Surveyor's Field Notebook 15327. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta. Also General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/40.

[41] Chapter 4, pages 141-143.

[42] Ibid. Also Surveyor's Field Notebook 15327. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta. Also Soil Rating map of the Whitecourt-Barrhead Area, Alberta. 83J-S½. Contained in A. Wynnyk, J.D. Lindsay, and Wm. Odynsky, Soil Survey of the Whitecourt and Barrhead Area, Alberta. Soil Survey Report Number 27 (Canada, Department of Agriculture, 1969).

[43] Ibid., file 2511216, roll 3004.

[44] Ibid., file 1997539, roll 2156.

[45] Ibid., file 2680115, roll 3029.

[46] Ibid., file 2507976, roll 3003.

[47] Ibid., file 2822700, roll 2416.

[48] Interview with Mrs. Naomi Dabels at Fort Assiniboine, May 7, 1976.

[49] See Chapter 1, pp. 2-3.

[50] Surveyor's Field Notebook 10888. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta.

[51] Chapter 5, pp. 170-173.

[52] Summer frosts were noted by surveyors of the area such as C.C. Fairchild in his surveys of townships 62 and 63, range five, west of the fifth in 1908-09 and 1912 respectively. See Surveyor's Field Notebooks 10866 and 14333. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta.

[53] Interviews with Mr. Dute Cartwright at Barrhead on May 7, 1976 and with Mr. Walter Thomson at Fort Assiniboine on May 8, 1976. Also Surveyors' Field Notebooks 10888, 14332, 14333. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta.

[54] Surveyors' Field Notebooks 10890, 10887, 10886, 10889, 15327. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta.

[55] Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 3063440, roll 2440; file 1997539, roll 2156; file 2490838, roll 2998.

[56] W.A. Mackintosh, Prairie Settlement: The

Geographical Setting. Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. I. (Toronto, 1934), pp. 147-149.

[57] Surveyors' Field Notebooks 10888 and 14333. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta.

[58] Interview with Mr. Walter Thomson at Fort Assiniboine, May 8, 1976. Also General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/39.

[59] Interview with Mr. Dute Cartwright at Barrhead, May 7, 1976. Also General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/39. See also Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 1817089, roll 2879; file 2851846, roll 2419; file 3694018, roll 2474.

[60] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976.

[61] G.R. Stevens, *Canadian National Railways*. Vol. 2. (Toronto, 1962), pp. 52, 68, 70.

[62] *Community Survey of Westlock* (Alberta Government Publicity Bureau Department of Industry & Tourism, 1970) p. 4. Also J.W. Judge,"Early Railroading in Northern Alberta "(*Alberta Historical Review*, Summer 1958), p. 16.

[63] Interview with Mrs. Naomi Dabels at Fort Assiniboine, May 7, 1976. Also General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/39.

[64] Interview with Mrs. Enid MacArthur at Fort Assiniboine, January 25, 1976. Also General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/38.

[65] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976. Also interview with Mrs. Elsie Thompson at Barrhead, May 7, 1976.

[66] Surveyor's Field Notebook 14333. Surveys Branch, Department of Transportation, Province of Alberta.

[67] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976. Also Chapter 2, pp. 45, 53, 54.

[68] Interviews with Mrs. Elsie Thompson at Barrhead, May 7, 1976 and Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976.

[69] Barrhead and District Historical Society, *Trails Northwest*, p. 303.

[70] Interview with Mrs. Elsie Thompson at Barrhead, May 7, 1976.

[71] W.A. Mackintosh, Prairie Settlement: The Geographical Setting. Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. I, pp. 55-57.

[72] Interviews with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976 and Mr. Dute Cartwright at Barrhead, May 7, 1976. Also Chester Martin, Dominion Lands Policy, pp. 405-406.

[73] Barrhead and District Historical Society, Trails Northwest, pp. 286-287.

[74] Interview with Mrs. Naomi Dabels at Fort Assiniboine, May 7, 1976.

[75] Interview with Mr. Dute Cartwright at Barrhead, May 7, 1976.

[76] Chapter 4, pp. 135-136.

[77] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976. Also E.G. Mardon, Community Names of Alberta (Lethbridge, 1972) p. 53. Also Eric and Patricia Holmgren, 2000 Place Names of Alberta (Saskatoon, 1972), p. 33.

[78] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1972.

[79] Chapter 5, p. 174.

[80] Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta, accession 70.313. Files 2397958 and 2398073, roll 2980.

[81] Ibid., file 1988166, roll 2152.

[82] Ibid., file 1988164, roll 2152.

[83] Canadian Almanac, 1910, p. 215. Also Barrhead and District Historical Society, Trails Northwest, p. 285. Also General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta, accession 75.93/38-39. Also Topographical Surveys Branch map, Fort Assiniboine Sheet 1910. Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 71.103. Also interview with Mr. Dute Cartwright at Barrhead, May 7, 1976.

[84] General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/40. Also Topographical Surveys Branch map, Fort Assiniboine Sheet, 1912.

Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 71.103.

[85] *Canadian Almanac*, 1914, p. 218. Also interviews with Mrs. Enid McArthur at Fort Assiniboine, January 25, 1976 and Mr. Dute Cartwright at Barrhead, May 7, 1976, and information given to me by Mr. Walter Thomson of Fort Assiniboine. Also Barrhead and District Historical Society, *Trails Northwest*, p. 292. Also Department of the Interior Map of Alberta, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 68.278/1.

[86] Mardon, *Community Names of Alberta*, p. 136.

[87] Interviews with Mr. Raymond Olson and Mrs. Naomi Dabels at Fort Assiniboine, January 24 and May 7, 1976. Also General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/39. Also Department of Education, Central Records files.

[88] Department of Education, Central Records files.

[89] Interview with Mrs. Elsie Thompson at Barrhead, May 7, 1976.

[90] C.A. Dawson and E.R. Younge, *Pioneering in the Prairie Provinces: The Social Side of the Settlement Process*. Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. VIII. (Toronto 1940), pp. 67, 193. Also interviews with Mrs. Naomi Dabels at Fort Assiniboine and Mrs. Elsie Thompson at Barrhead, May 7, 1976.

[91] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 7, 1976. Also Dawson and Younge, *Pioneering in the Prairie Provinces*, p. 189.

[92] Surveyor's Notebook 14333. Also MacGregor, *The Klondike Rush Through Edmonton*, p. 180. Also Barrhead and District Historical Society, *Trails Northwest*, p. 294.

[93] E.G. Mardon, *Community Names in Alberta*, p. 192.

[94] Barrhead and District Historical Society, *Trails Northwest*, p. 293.

[95] Barrhead and District Historical Society, *Trails Northwest*, p. 293. Also Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 3879477 roll 2480; file 2514427, roll 3005. Also Map of Fort Assiniboine, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 68.199/264.

[96] General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/39. Also interviews with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976 and with Mr. Dute Cartwright at Barrhead, May 7, 1976. Also

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Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. Files 2510855, roll 3004; file 1817093, roll 2879.

[97] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976. Also Chapter 5, pp. 175-176.

[98] Dawson and Younge, Pioneering in the Prairie Provinces, pp. 199-200.

[99] Ibid.

[100] General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/39.

[101] Ibid. Also interviews with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976 and with Mrs. Elsie Thompson at Barrhead, May 7, 1976. Also Barrhead and District Historical Society, Trails Northwest, pp. 292, 298.

[102] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976.

[103] Ibid. Also interview with Mr. Dute Cartwright at Barrhead, May 7, 1976. Also Barrhead and District Historical Society Trails Northwest, p. 292. Salem M. Hardy filed a homestead on the northeast quarter-section of section ten, township 61, range six, west of the fifth in 1911. See General Township Register, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 75.93/39.

[104] Interviews with Mr. Raymond Olson, at Fort Assiniboine, January 29, 1976, Mr. Dute Cartwright at Barrhead, May 7, 1976 and Mrs. Naomi Dabels at Fort Assiniboine, May 7, 1976. Also Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 3063440, roll 2440.

[105] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976. Also Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 2514427, roll 3005; file 3295258, roll 2463; file 2537449, roll 3007; and file 3879477, roll 2480.

[106] See Chapter 5, pp. 160-161.

[107] Mrs. Adkins was Mr. Raymond Olson's mother. She came to the district in 1910. This information is from the interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976. See also Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. Files 2132495 and 2132497, roll 2930; file 1695100,

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roll 2834; file 1706777, roll 2838.

[108] See Chapter 2, pp. 54-59 and Chapter 3, pp. 106-107.

[109] Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 2511170, roll 3004.

[110] Ibid., file 1771445, roll 2865.

[111] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976.

[112] Interview with Mrs. Naomi Dabels at Fort Assiniboine, May 7, 1976.

[113] Henderson's Directory for the City of Edmonton, 1913 (Henderson Publishing Co.), p. 757.

[114] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976.

[115] See Chapter 5, pp. 180-182. Also H.C. Jamieson Early Medicine in Alberta: The First Seventy-Five Years. (Edmonton, 1947), pp. 40, 41, 92-93.

[116] Henderson's Directory for the City of Edmonton, 1911, pp. 513, 528, 564-565.

[117] E.J. Legal, Short Sketches of the History of the Catholic Churches and Missions in Central Alberta, (1914) pp. 80-82. Also see Chapter 5, p. 13. Also Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 1817087, roll 2879.

[118] See Chapter 5, p. 170.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976.

[121] Barrhead and District Historical Society, Trails Northwest, p. 303.

[122] See Map 4.

[123] Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 2514427, roll 3005.

[124] Ibid. Files; 1506307, roll 2934; 1997539, roll 2156; 1817085, 1817087, 1817089, 1817091, 1817093, 1817095, 1817097, roll 2879; 2822116, roll 2416; 1771443, 1771445, 1771447, roll 2865.

[125] The following is a list of all the homestead files consulted on this question, listed according to the township concerned. In each case the file number is followed by the microfilm roll number.

Township 61, range five, west of the fifth

1884740-2112
2726367-2406
2771504-2411
2817374-2416
2817376-2416
2822116-2416
3008589-2435
3066069-2441
1506307-2794
1626164-2811
1626181-2811
1626183-2811
1711034-2839
2140621-2934
2141454-2934
2228409-2959
2444866-2992
2444872-2992
2498271-3000
2505962-3002

Township 62, range five, west of the fifth

2999355-2433
3157937-2451
3169282-2452
3169284-2452
3227052-2459
3261054-2462

Township 63, range five, west of the

2943317-2428
3227111-2459
3295258-2463

Township 61, range six, west of the fifth

1950746-2138
1988164-2152
1988166-2152
1997539-2156
2703942-2402
2705876-2403
2714826-2404
1817095-2879
1817097-2879
2380769-2978
2582069-3014
2582075-3014
2582077-3014
2691889-3032

Township 62, range six, west of the fifth

1885893-2113
1912871-2127
2025028-2162
2042906-2165
2714802-2404
2745197-2408
3879477-2480
1771443-2865
1771445-2865
1771447-2865
1817085-2879
1817087-2879
1817089-2879
1817091-2879
1817093-2879
1839673-2886
2132495-2930
2132497-2930
2219391-2957
2228411-2959
2271570-2966
233685I-2973
2349699-2974
2397986-2980
2397988-2980
2490838-2998
2497656-3000
2497658-3000
2507976-3003
2507978-3003
2510855-3004
2510875-3004
2511166-3004
2511168-3004
2511170-3004
2511172-3004
2511210-3004
2511216-3004
2537446-3004
2510853-3005
2514427-3005
2537449-3007
2544157-3009
2544159-3009
2544165-3009
2601834-3016
2607073-3017
2630095-3019
2655655-3024
2665431-3026
2680115-3029
2680117-3029
2691895-3032
2691897-3032
2691899-3032

Township 63, range six, west of the fifth

3063436-2440
3063438-2440
3063440-2440
3063462-2440
3063464-2440

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Township 61, range seven, west of the fifth

2851844-2419
28[illegible]846-2419
2851848-2419
2851850-2419
2851852-2419
2851854-2419
3694018-2474

Township 62, range 7, west of the fifth

2705866-2403
2727751-2406
2756526-2409
2756528-2409
2756925-2410
2762353-2410
2762355-2410
2762357-2410
2822700-2416
2827529-2417
2827533-2417
2849308-2419
3135383-2448
3165493-2451
1682147-2827
1695100-2834
1706777-2838
1828769-2882
2065128-2902
2132493-2930
2149107-2937
2228405-2959
2228407-2959
2278733-2967
2371832-2977
2397958-2980
2397976-2980
2398073-2980
2444824-2991
2681962-3030

[126] Douglas Hill, *The Opening of the Canadian West*, (London, 1967), p. 222. Also see Robert England, *The Colonization of Western Canada: A Study of Contemporary Land Settlement* (1896-1934) (London, 1936), pp. 263-264.

[127] See Appendix 8.

[128] See note 125.

[129] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976. Also Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. Files 2132495, 2132497, roll 2930.

[130] Interview with Mr. Dute Cartwright at Barrhead, May 7, 1976.

[131] See note 125.

[132] Ibid.

[133] See Appendix 9.

[134] See note 125.

[135] Ibid. Also interviews with Mrs. Enid McArthur at Fort Assiniboine, January 25, 1976 and Mr. Raymond Olson, January 24, 1976. See also Appendix 10.

[136] See Chapter 5, p. 174.

[137] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson, at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976. Also interview with Mr.

Dute Cartwright at Barrhead, May 7, 1976.

[138] See Chapter 2, pp. 47-48.

[139] Interview with Mrs. Enid McArthur at Fort Assiniboine, January 25, 1976. Also interviews with Mrs. Elsie Thompson at Barrhead, May 7, 1976 and with Mrs. Naomi Dabels at Fort Assiniboine, May 7, 1976.

[140] Interviews with Mr. Dute Cartwright at Barrhead, May 7, 1976 and with Mrs. Naomi Dabels at Fort Assiniboine, May 7, 1976.

[141] Ibid. Also interview with Mr. Raymond Olson, January 24, 1976.

[142] Edward H. Carrothers "Three Trips to the Peace River Country" (Alberta Historical Review, Autumn 1965), pp. 27-28.

[143] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976.

[144] Ibid.

[145] Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 1626181, roll 2811.

[146] Barrhead and District Historical Society, Trails Northwest, pp. 17, 57.

[147] See Chapter 5, pp. 172-173.

[148] Ibid., pp. 186-187.

[149] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976.

[150] Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 1626181, roll 2811; files 2141454, 2140621, roll 2934.

[151] Interview with Mrs. Elsie Thompson at Barrhead, May 7, 1976. See also Map 4.

[152] Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313. File 2025028, roll 2162.

[153] Ibid., file 1817093, roll 2879. Also Barrhead and District Historical Society, Trails Northwest, p. 30.

[154] Interviews with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976, and with Mrs. Naomi Dabels at Fort Assiniboine, May 7, 1976.

[155] E.O. Drouin, Lac Ste. Anne Sakahigan (Edmonton: 1973), pp. 52-53.

[156] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976.

[157] See Chapter 5, pp. 171, 175-177.

[158] Interview with Mr. Raymond Olson at Fort Assiniboine, January 24, 1976.

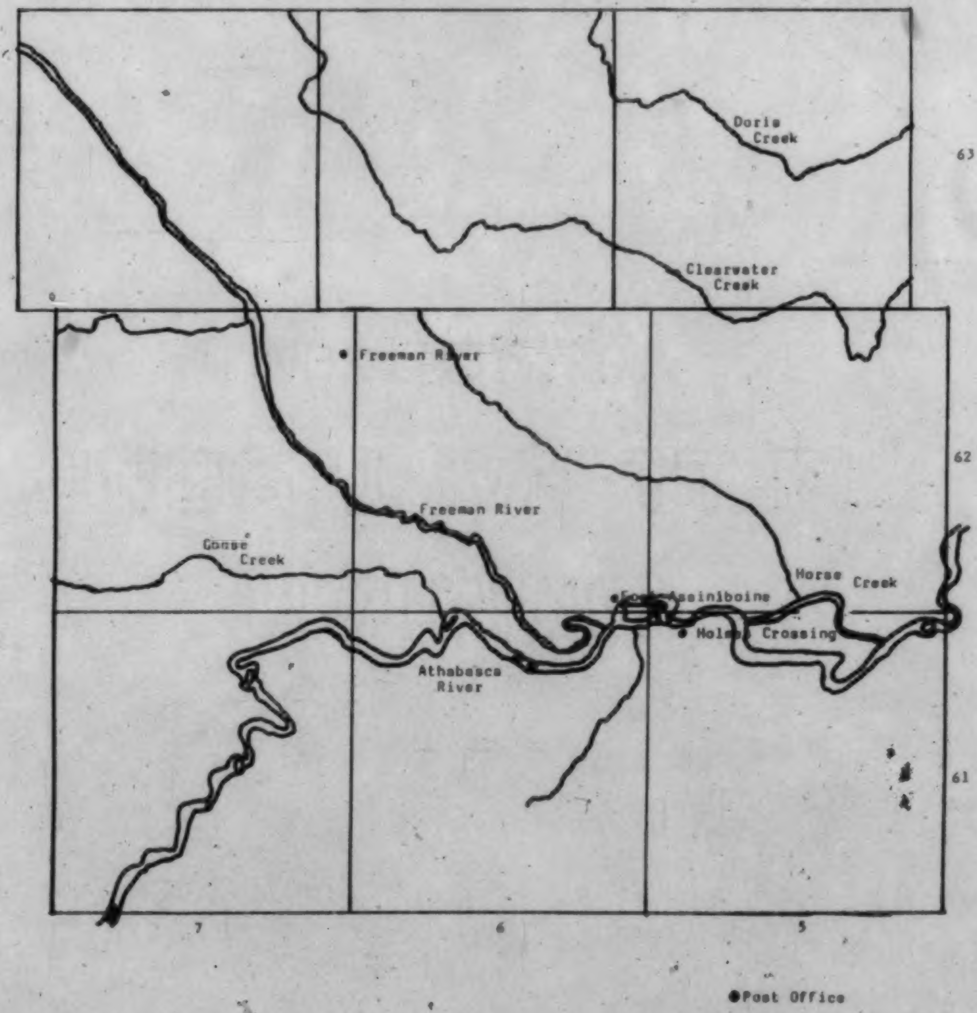
[159] See Chapter 5, pp. 182-183, 185-186.

[160] Homestead Files, Department of Lands and Forests, Provincial Archives of Alberta accession 70.313, file 1626181, roll 2811.

[161] Improvement Districts file, Provincial Archives of Alberta. Also Map of Alberta, 1922 in Census of Canada 1921, Vol. I - Population. (Ottawa, 1924).

Map 5

Fort Assiniboine district


Doris Creek
63
Clearwater Creek
Freeman River
62
Freeman River
Goose Creek
Horse Creek
Fort Assiniboine
Holmes Crossing
Athabasca River
61
7
6
5
●Post Office

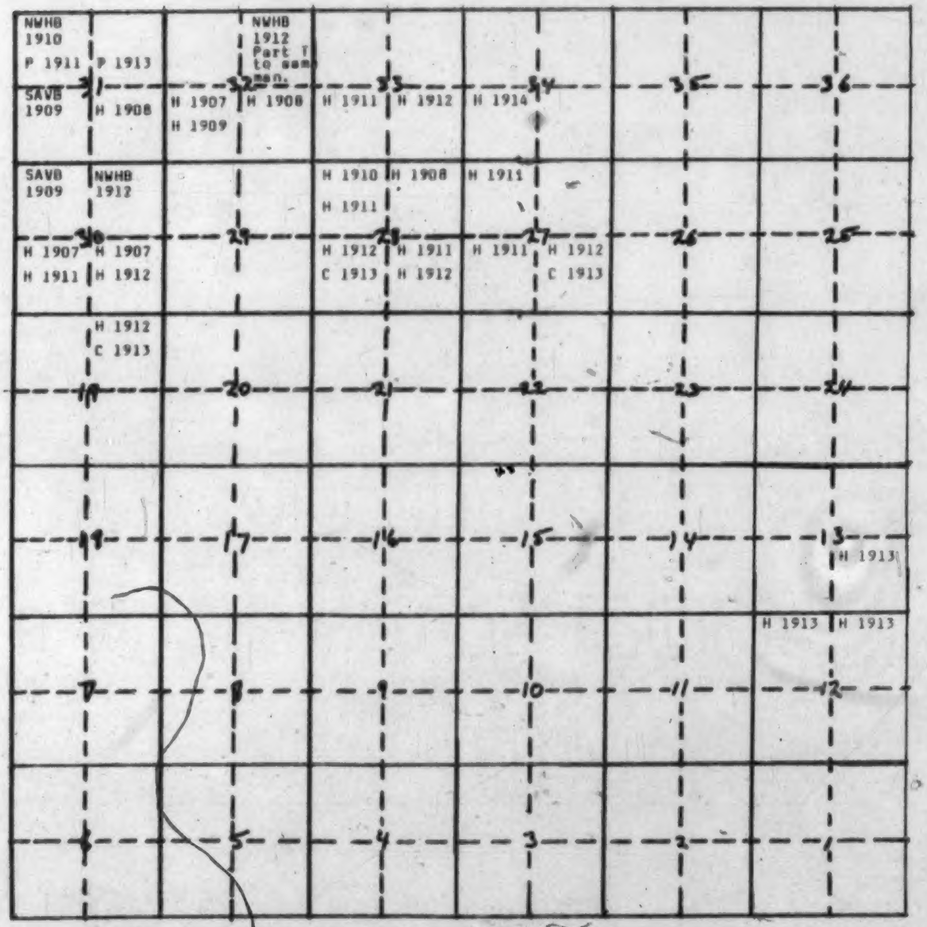
The following abbreviations are to be interpreted as:

H = Homestead
P = Purchase
SAVB = South African Veterans' Bounty scrip
NWHB = North-West Half-Breed scrip.
C = Cancelled
T = Transfer

These symbols will be found on the following section of Maps.

Map 6

Township 61, Range 5, West of the Fifth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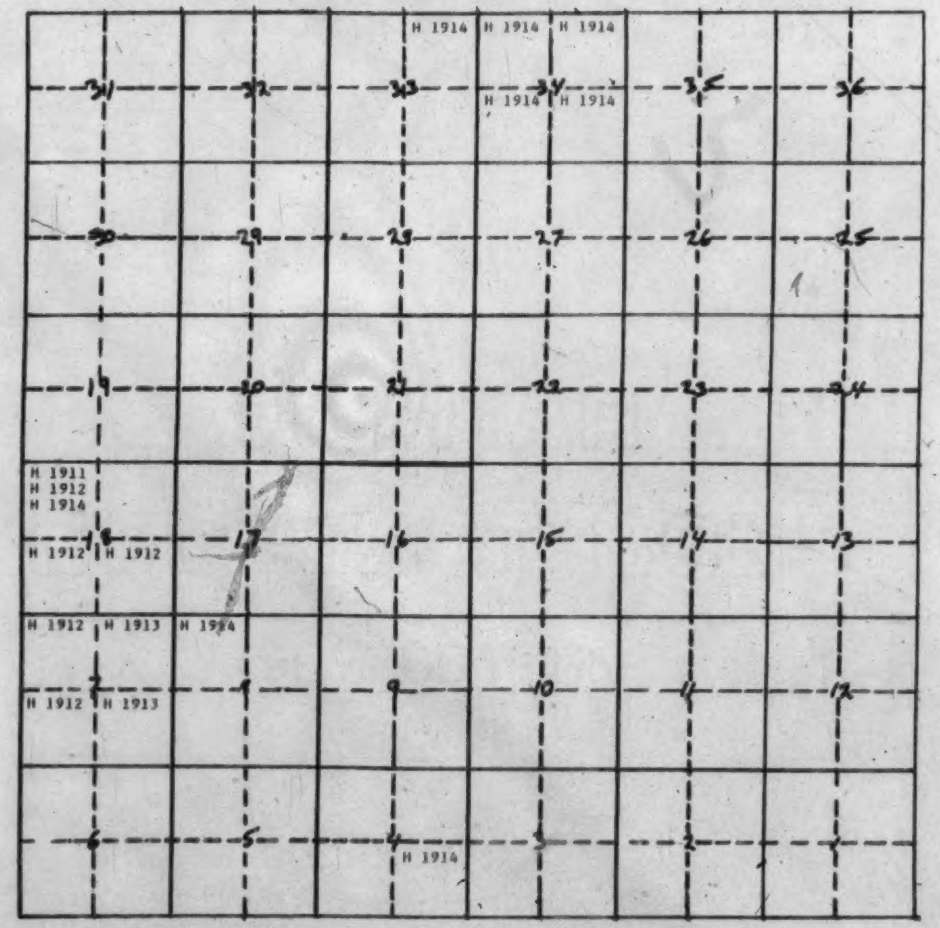
Map 7

Township 62, Range 5, West of the Fifth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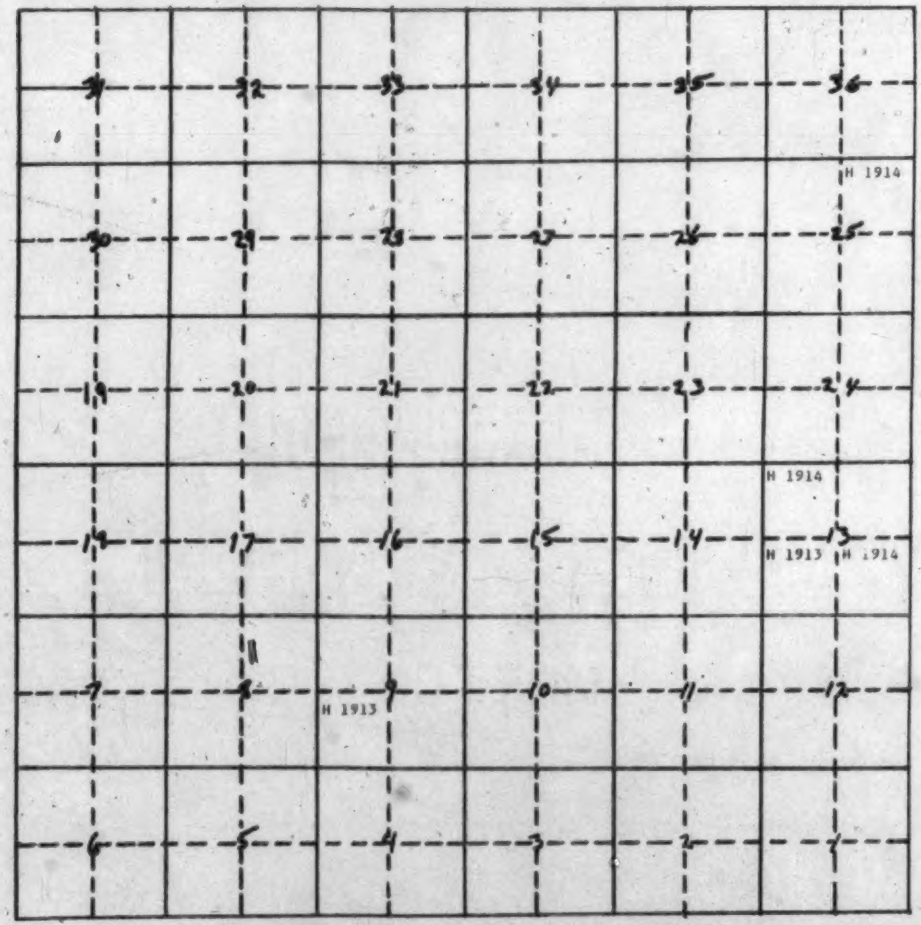
Map 8

Township 63, Range 5, West of the Fifth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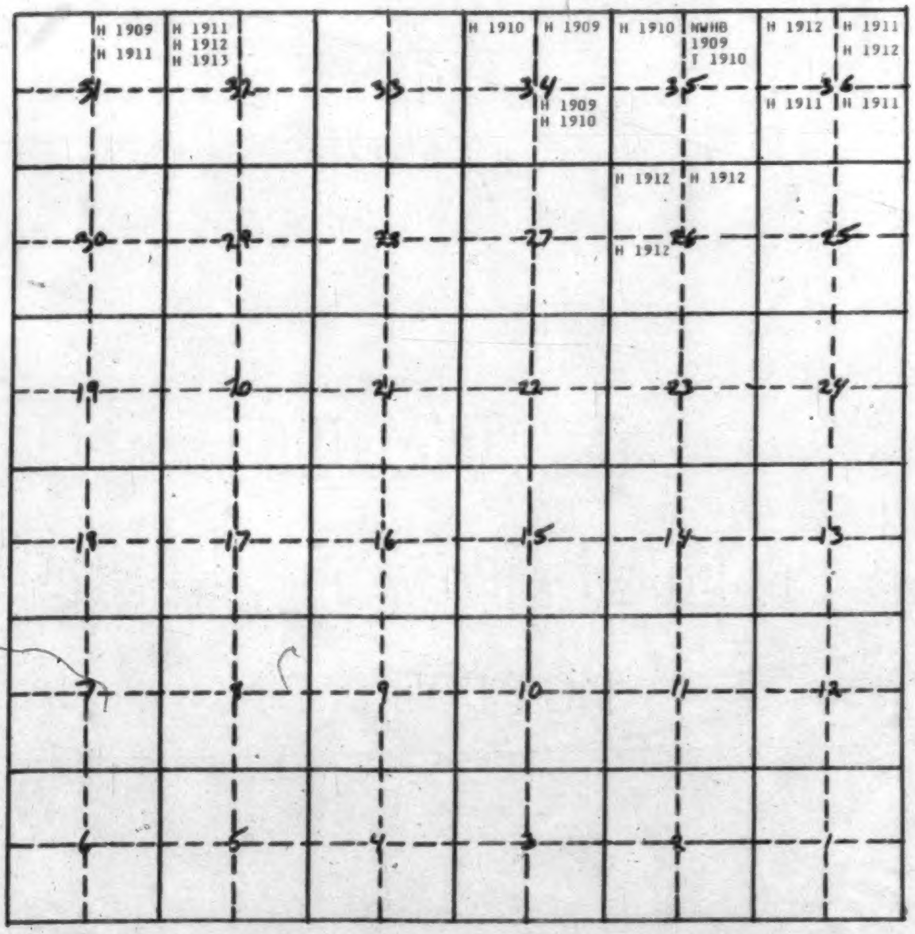
Map 9

Township 61, Range 6, West of the Fifth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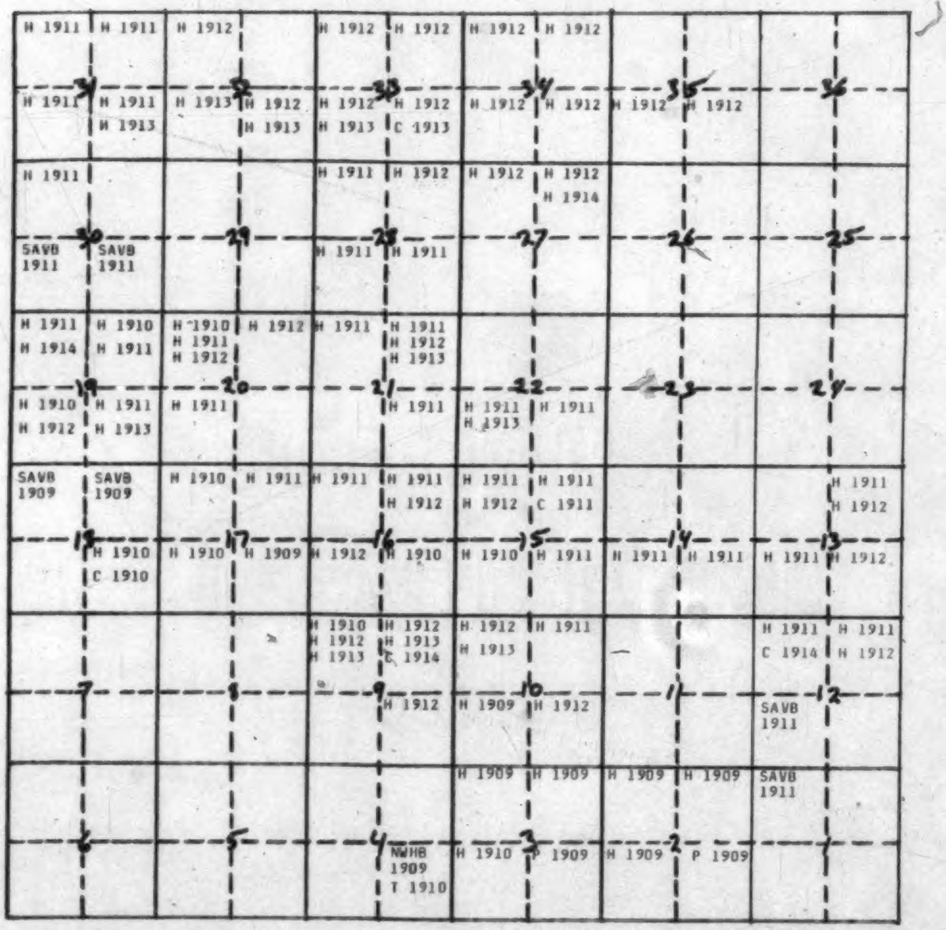
Map 10

Township 62, Range 6, West of the Fifth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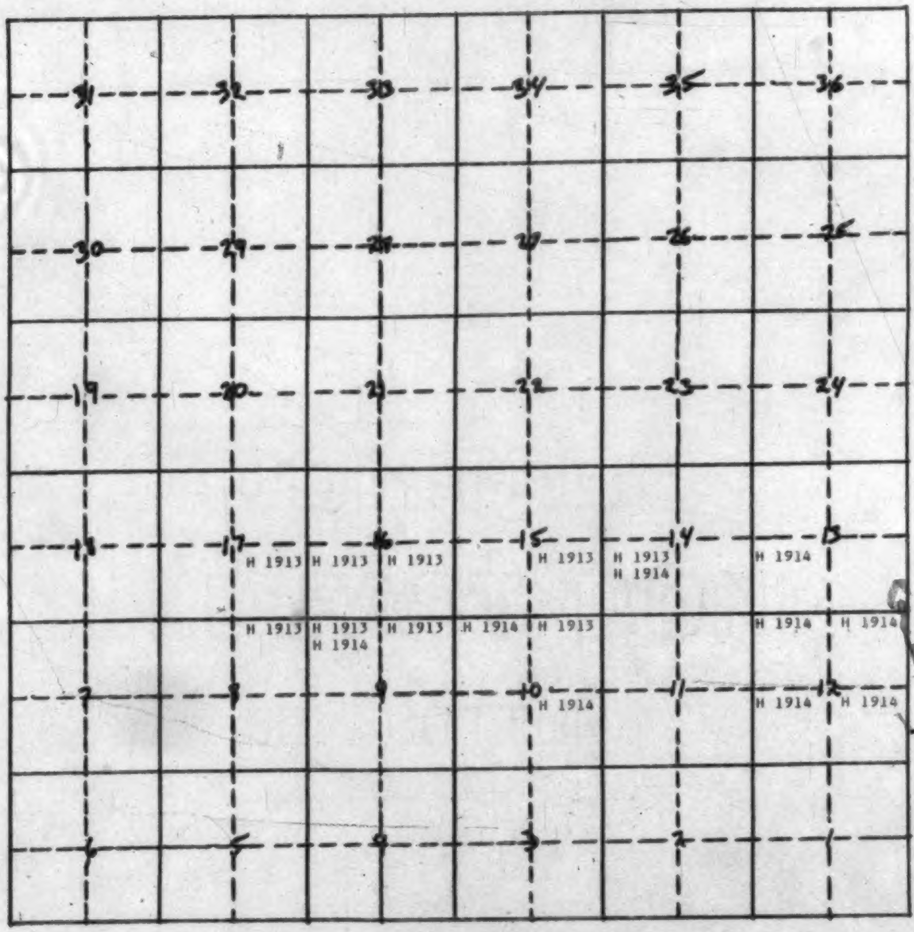
Map 11

Township 63, Range 6, West of the Fifth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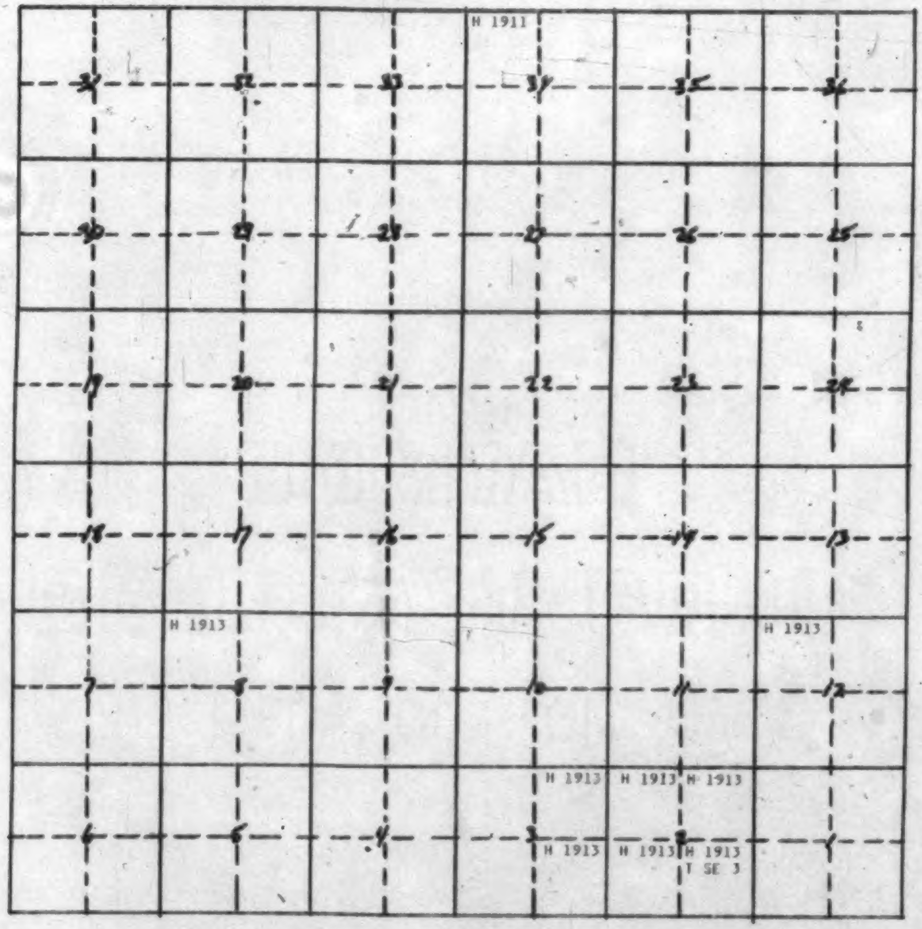
Map 12

Township 61, Range 7, West of the Fifth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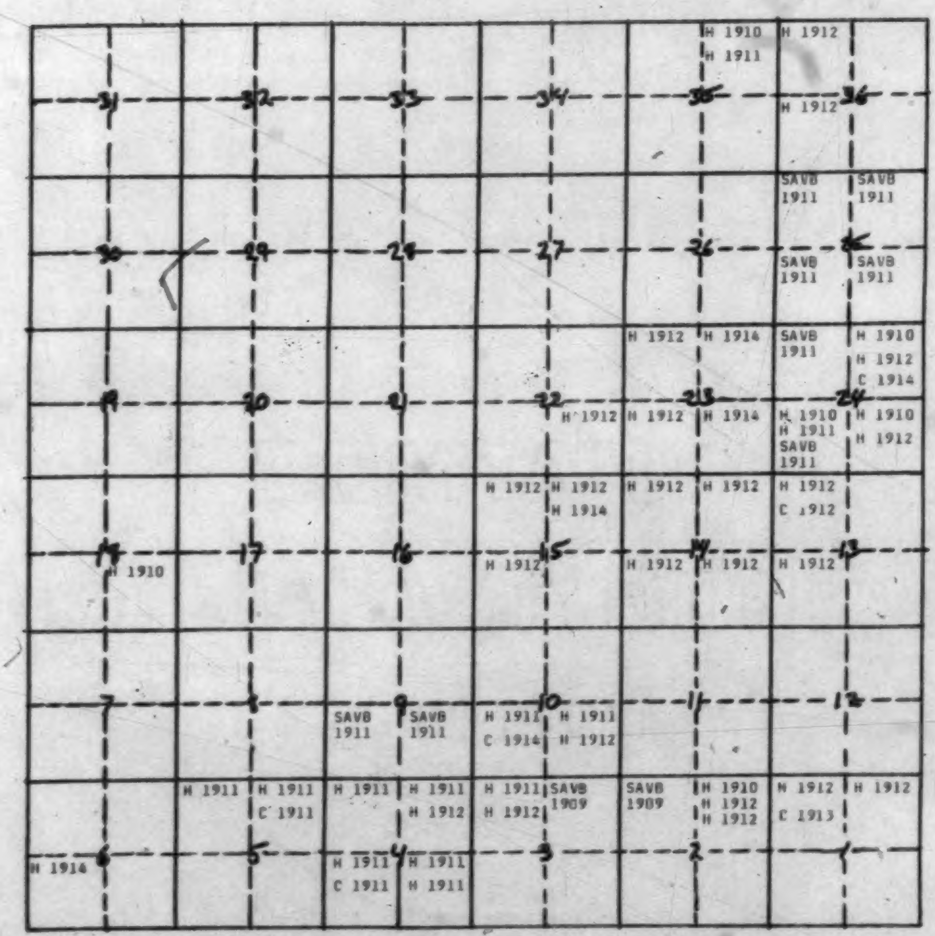
Map 13

Township 62, Range 7, West of the Fifth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Appendix 1

Staff Lists, Fort Assiniboine 1825/26-1860/61[1]

	Winter		Summer	
Year	Man in Charge	Other Employees	Man in Charge	Other Employees
1825-26	James McMillan, C.T.	George Deschambeault, Clerk. Henry Fisher, Jr. Clerk. J.-B. Parisien, Bernier, Charles Beauchamp, Francois Portelance, Charles Lamoine, and Pierre Lemoin Delorme, servants.	George Linton, Clerk.	Two men including interpreter.
1826-27	J.E. Harriott, Clerk.	Jacques Cardinal, horsekeeper Charles Beauchamp, Francois La France, Pierre Lemais Delorme, J.-B. Parisien, Francois Portelance, and one Roy, servants. (ranked as "men"). Asstin dit Appsasish, native hunter.	Michel Klyne, Postmaster.	One man.
1827-28	J.E. Harriott, Clerk.	J.-B. Parisien, servant. Probably more men but no definite record of them.	George Linton, Clerk.	One man.
1828-29	George Linton, Clerk.	J.-B. Parisien, Charles Beauchamp, Tappage, Pierre Delorme, Two Indians hired as hunters.	Unknown.	Two men. Some Indians hired as Fort Hunters.
1829-30	George Linton, Clerk. Note - Richard Grant spent part of the year here and part at Edmonton.	J.-B. Parisien and one other man, servants.	Unknown.	Two men.

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1830-31	Richard Grant Clerk.	J.-B. Parisien, Pierre Delorme, and a man named Gastre, servants. Che a, native hunter.	Unknown.	Two men.
1831-32	Richard Grant, Clerk.	J.-B. Parisien, servant.	Unknown.	One man.
1832-33	Richard Grant, Clerk.	An interpreter. J.-B. Parisien, Assistant Interpreter. Antoine Auger, bowsman. Baptiste Parisien, middleman.	Unknown	One man.
1833-34	An interpreter.	J.-B. Parisien, Pierre Delorme, Jacques Arionaise, Pierre Gerard or Gimard, servant.	Colin Fraser, Interpreter.	Two men.
1834-35	An interpreter.	Unknown.	An interpreter.	One man.
1835-36	An interpreter.	Unknown.	An interpreter.	One man.
1836-37	John Rowand, Jr. Postmaster.	John Cunningham, Louis Lapierre Brilliant, Pierre Delorme, Baptiste Parisien, Francois Tranquil, Jacques Arionaise, Louis Loyer, servants.	An interpreter.	One man.
1837-38	John Rowand, Jr.	Unknown.	An interpreter.	One man.
1838-39	Unknown.	Unknown.	Unknown.	Unknown.
1839-40	John Rowand, Jr. Clerk.	Unknown.	An interpreter.	One man.
1840-41	John Rowand, Jr. Clerk.	Unknown.	An interpreter.	One man.
1841-42	John Rowand, Jr. Clerk.	Flett.	An interpreter.	One man.

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1842-43	Fort Assiniboine not mentioned in min. of Council Northern Department. Probably closed.	do.	do.	do.
1843-44	unknown.	unknown.	unknown.	unknown.
1844-45	Fort Assiniboine not mentioned in min. of Council Northern Department. Probably closed.	do.	do.	do.
1845-46	a labourer.	unknown.	unknown.	Two men.
1846-47	a labourer.	unknown.	unknown.	Two men.
1847-48	Joseph Brazeau, Postmaster.	unknown.	unknown.	Two men.
1848-49	Joseph Brazeau, Postmaster.	unknown.	Joseph Brazeau, Postmaster	Two men.
1849-50	Joseph Brazeau, Postmaster.	unknown.	Joseph Brazeau, Postmaster	Two men
1850-51	Colin Fraser, Postmaster.	unknown.	Fort Assiniboine not mentioned in min. of Council Northern Department. Probably closed.	do.
1851-52	Colin Fraser, Postmaster.	unknown.	Colin Fraser, Postmaster	Two men.
1852-53	unknown.	unknown.	Colin Fraser, Postmaster.	Two men.
1853-54	An interpreter.	unknown.	An interpreter	One man.

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1854-55	Antoine Rennier, Interpreter.	Two men.	An interpreter.	One man.
1855-56	Antoine Rennier, Interpreter.	Unknown.	An interpreter.	One man.
1856-57	Antoine Rennier, Interpreter. note-Rennier was also referred to as "Kimenawis".	An unknown number of men.	An interpreter.	unknown.
1857-58	Fort Assiniboine not mentioned in min. of Council Northern Department or Edmonton post journal. Probably closed.	do.	do.	do.
1858-59	Antoine Rennier, Interpreter.	unknown.	Antoine Rennier, Interpreter.	unknown.
1859-60	Oliver Belrose, Interpreter.	unknown.	Antoine Rennier, Interpreter.	unknown.
1860-61	Olivier Belrose, Interpreter.	unknown.	Olivier Belrose, Interpreter.	unknown.

1. This table was compiled from the following sources:

(a) Fort Assiniboine - post journals, account books, report on district.

(b) Edmonton - post journals.

(c) Minutes of Council Northern Department, contained in the following:

- R.H. Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department 1821-1831 pp. 109, 144, 180-181, 207, 236, 442.
- E.H. Oliver, ed. The Canadian North-West. Contains minutes for the period 1830-1843. Vol. I pp. 645, 661. Vol.II pp. 677-678, 693-694, 713-714, 729, 761-762, 778-779, 802, 819-820, 847, 858-866.
- Minutes in the Hudson's Bay Archives, 1834 and 1844-1860.

(d) Journal of Robert T. Rundle, 1841-46. (Unpublished manuscript) Historic Sites Branch, Department of Culture, Province of Alberta.

(e) Memoirs of Father Albert Lacombe (unpublished manuscript). Oblate Archives Collection, Provincial Archives of Alberta; Accession 71.220.

(f) P.E. Breton, Le Grand Chef des Prairies, p. 62.

In all cases of dispute, the post records have been taken as the final authority.

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Appendix 2 - Returns

A. Outfit 1826[1]

26 Bear
515 Prime Beaver
546 Common Beaver
12 feet Coating and Scraps
46 lb. Castorum
21 Cats
7 Fishers
5 Cross Foxes
4 Red Foxes
2741 Martens
21 Mink's
291 Musquash (Muskrats)
22 Prime Otters
8 Common Otters
75 Swans
6 Wolves
15 Wolverines
34 Swan skins
108 Large Moose skins
6 Parchment Moose skins

value = £2523 14s. 10d.

B. Outfit 1832[2]

30 Large Black Bears
20 Cub Black Bears
8 Large Brown Bears
4 Cub Brown Bears
5 Large Grizzlies
4 Cub Grizzlies
291 Large Beavers
284 Small Beavers
17 lb. Castorum
8 Fishers
1 Cross Fox
27 Lynx or Cats
226 Martens
4 Minks
1014 Muskrats
24 Prime and Common Otters
64 Swans
11 Wolverines
3 Wolves
217 large dressed Elk Skins
13 Small dressed Elk Skins
8 Large Parcht. dressed Elk skins
275 Swan Quills

value = £982 9d.

Additional Returns Outfit 1832

18 Black Bear large and small
1 large Brown Bear
3 Grizzlies large and small
37 large beavers
60 half beavers
3/16 lb. beaver coating
1 lynx or cat
9 Martens
76 Muskrats
3 Otters prime and common
1 Swan
1 Wolf
21 Large Elk Skins

value = £164 15s.

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[1] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1826-27. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/1.

[2] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1832-33. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/2.

C. Outfit 1836[3]

51 Large Black Bears
34 cub Black Bears
26 Large Brown Bears
5 cub brown bears
7 large grizzly bears
548 large beaver
304 small beaver
32 lb. castorum
29 Fishers
5 Red Foxes
1 Cross Fox
2 silver foxes
254 lynx
1139 Martens
12 Minks
1057 Muskrats
52 Prime Otters
6 Common Otters
36 Swan Skins
3 wolves
8 Wolverines
389 Large Moose Skins
43 Small Moose Skins
11 Bags Pemmican

value = £2034 10s. 2d.

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[3] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1836-37. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/d/3.

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Appendix 3

Saskatchewan District Returns,

Outfits 1861-1868 [1]

Post	1861	1862
Edmonton House	3234/14/6	5708/18/1 1/2
Rocky Mountain House		
Lesser Slave Lake	2185/16/0	2522/11/6
Lac La Biche	750/2/2	1162/16/7
Fort Pitt	1434/6/5	3434/3/6 1/2
Carlton House	1203/3/6 1/2	1474/1/1
Jasper House	381/11/0	839/18/6
Fort Assiniboine	407/4/0	446/9/6
Lac Ste. Anne	436/6/2	630/5/3
	9835/7/3 1/2	16,219/4/1

Post	1863	1864	1865	1866
Carlton House	1850/19/9	997/7/6	1256/18/3	469/19/8
Fort Pitt	2656/2/5	2517/12/5	906/19/10	1724/3/0
Lac La Biche	1407/1/4	1814/6/2	1113/8/4	2630/13/11
Victoria		960/5/5	376/15/2	932/4/1
Edmonton	3495/6/9	4446/11/8	2519/3/11	3875/8/8
Lac Ste. Anne	707/19/0	843/4/0	659/5/6	1209/11/6
Fort Assiniboine	533/13/6	728/10/0	780/13/6	953/14/0
Lesser Slave Lake	3372/10/0	4132/13/0	4300/0/0	3604/12/6
Jasper House	1471/5/0	893/18/0	1476/16/0	1329/14/0
Rocky Mountain House		1703/12/2	1188/1/6	1671/2/0
	15,494/17/9	18,863/1/1	14,578/2/2	18,265/10/8

Appendix 3 continued

Post	1867	1868
Carlton	11[illegible]7/2	1732/7/11
Fort Pitt	201[illegible]	957/17/10
Lac La Biche	1639/18/9	1182/17/8
Victoria	1608/11/10	691/13/9
Edmonton	3886/6/8	3063/17/5
Lac Ste. Anne	868/12/6	994/14/9
Fort Assiniboine	688/16/0	596/13/0
Lesser Slave Lake	4118/5/6	4467/4/3
Jasper House	985/5/0	955/3/6
Rocky Mountain House	1862/15/0	863/11/4
	18,817/0/2	15,506/1/5

[1] Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/d/150, 172.

The above figures are stated in pounds, shillings and pence.

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Appendix 4

Edmonton District Balance Sheet, Outfit 1874[1]

Outposts Returns

Lesser Slave Lake	$ 25,947.85
Fort Assiniboine	4,412.42
Lake St. Annes	7,182.37
Victoria Post	5,726.20
Buffalo Lake Post	9,438.76
Bow River Post	16,010.20
Rocky Mountain House	3,236.92

Outposts Inventories - 1 June 1875

Lesser Slave Lake	$ 1,901.83
Fort Assiniboine	43.71
Lake St. Annes	891.46
Victoria Post	1,848.10
Buffalo Lake Post	821.14
Bow River Post	1,172.72
Rocky Mountain House	2,445.47

Supplies to Outposts - 1 June 1875

Lesser Slave Lake	$ 12,389.19
Rocky Mountain House	6,978.16
Bow River Post	15,112.29
Buffalo Lake	8,239.65
Lake St. Annes	6,800.89
Fort Assiniboine	2,017.61
Victoria	10,473.94

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[1] Accounts Received At Commissioner's Office from H.Q.'s of Northern Department Districts. Hudson's Bay Archives, D. 30/3.

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Appendix 5

Staff Biographies Outfits 1824-1874

The following biographies are short summaries of the lives of Fort Assiniboine staff about whom more is known than simply their years of service at the post. Very little information is available concerning the servants ("other employees") who were employed there, and consequently few of them are listed here. Any information known about such persons is conveyed by the table in Appendix 1. References will be given for each entry.

Arionaise, Jacques

This man served at Fort Assiniboine during the winters of Outfits 1833 and 1836.[1] He also served in the Saskatchewan District during Outfits 1840 and 1843. In the latter case he was employed in the capacity of middleman.[2] He had been listed in Fort Assiniboine records in 1832 under "Servants of Other Places."[3]

[1] Edmonton post journal, 1833-34. Also Fort Assiniboine account book, 1836-37.

[2] Saskatchewan District Statements, Outfits 1840 and 1843.

[3] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1832-33.

Appsasish or Apasis, Asstin

This man was a native who was hired as a hunter at the post during Outfit 1826.[1] He was probably the same Apasis who was a hunter for Edward Ermatinger's Columbia express party in the autumn of 1827.[2]

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[1] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1826-27.

[2] Ermatinger, "York Factory Express Journal", p. 109.

Auger, Antoine Sr.

This man served at Fort Assiniboine during the winter of Outfit 1832.[1] He also served in the Saskatchewan District during Outfits 1843 and 1850. He had a son, Antoine, who served in the district during Outfits 1850-1851 and 1855, employed during the latter as a horsekeeper.[2]

[1] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1832-33.

[2] Edmonton District Statements, Outfits 1843, 1850, 1851 and 1855.

Beauchamp, Charles

Beauchamp arrived at Fort Assiniboine in autumn 1825.[1] His name is mentioned among the employees of the post in Outfits 1826 and 1828[2] as well, but he probably also served at the post in Outfit 1827. He probably served for the next five outfits at Edmonton, from which place he departed, with his large family, for Red River on May 15, 1834.[3] He was possibly of mixed blood, and his family probably was as well.

[1] Edmonton post journal, 1824-25.

[2] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1826-27 and post journal, 1828-29.

[3] Edmonton post journal, 1833-34.

Belrose or Bellerose, Olivier

Bellerose served as manager of Fort Assiniboine during

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the winters of 1859-60 and 1860-61, and the summer of 1861; his rank was interpreter. He also served as manager of the post during the winter of 1861-62.[1] Bellerose seems to have first served in the Saskatchewan District during Outfit 1840, as a middleman. He also served in the district during Outfits 1843, 1850-1851, and 1855.[2] He probably had a family and had spent some time at Lac La Biche; H.J. Moberly noted in Outfit 1856 that the journal for that place contained an entry stating that "Mrs. Bellerose was delivered of a fine girl."[3] Bellerose wintered at Fort Pitt during the winter of 1862-63 and at Edmonton during Outfits 1865-1870.[4] Norbert Bellerose, at Edmonton during the former period,[5] was probably his son. Bellerose continued in the Saskatchewan District during the post-monopoly period. In the years 1871-1873 and again in 1877 he was on transport duty, bringing in carts of provisions from the plains and returns from the district posts to Edmonton.[6]

[1] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1859-1860. Also Edmonton post journals, 1859-60 and 1860-61. Also Appendix 1.

[2] Saskatchewan District Statements, Outfits 1840, 1843, 1850-51, 1855.

[3] Moberly, When Fur Was King, pp. 83-84.

[4] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1862-1870, also Edmonton post journal, 1862-1870.

[5] Edmonton post journal, 1862-63.

[6] Ibid., 1871-73, 1877-79.

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Brazeau, Joseph

Brazeau was in charge of Fort Assiniboine during the winters of 1847-48, 1848-49, all of Outfit 1849, and the spring of 1850. His rank was postmaster. Afterwards he was in charge of Jasper House from the fall of 1850 through the summer of 1855. In the fall of 1855 he was placed in charge of Rocky Mountain House. During the summer of 1856 he was at Edmonton. This pattern was in use through the summer of 1860. He was in charge of Rocky Mountain House from the fall of 1860 through the summer of 1861 as a clerk. In the winter of 1861-62 he was in charge of Jasper House and served at Edmonton for the summer of 1862. From the fall of 1862 through the summer of 1864 he was at Edmonton, and then returned to Rocky Mountain House for the fall of 1864 through the summer of 1868. He retired in 1868.[1] Brazeau, according to the Earl of Southesk, had been born in the United States of America.[2] He died September 2, 1871, at Fort Edmonton.[3]

[1] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1847-1868.

[2] Earl of Southesk, Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains, Edited by L.G. Thomas. (Tokyo, 1969) p. 151.

[3] Edmonton post journal, 1871.

Calder, William A.

William Calder began his service in the Hudson's Bay Company in 1849.[1] He was a steersman in the Saskatchewan District during Outfit 1855,[2] and by 1858 had become an interpreter. He was put in charge of the post at Lac Ste. Anne for the winters of 1858-59 and 1859-60. Calder

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became a postmaster during Outfit 1860, when he had charge of Lac Ste. Anne for the winter and also for the summer of 1861. He served at Edmonton during the winter of 1861-62, and in the summer of 1862 was listed as "disposable" within the Saskatchewan District. Calder was in charge of Fort Assiniboine for the fall of Outfit 1862 through Outfit 1872 inclusive.[3] He was re-engaged as a postmaster in June of 1872.[4] Calder served, with the rank of clerk, at Lesser Slave Lake during Outfits 1874-1876,[5] and retired in 1877.[6] He subsequently re-entered the Company's service and was in charge of Lac Ste. Anne during Outfits 1881 and 1882,[7] and in the minutes of the Council of the Northern Department for 1883 was listed as "disposable" within the Edmonton District.[8] In 1883 Calder was listed as suffering from consumption and unfit for active service, and his contract was to expire in 1884.[9] He probably retired shortly afterwards, for his name does not appear on subsequent servant lists for the Edmonton District. Calder had a wife and at least two sons, one of whom was William, Jr., who escorted Horetzky on his trip north from Edmonton in 1872. Both (William and James, or John) were in the Company's service during the 1870's and 1880's.[10]

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[1] Edmonton List of Servants, Outfit 1874. Calder was listed here as having been in the Company's service for 25 years.

[2] Saskatchewan District Statement, Outfit 1855.

[3] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1858-1870. Extracts from Memoranda of same, 1872. Also Edmonton post journal, 1871-72.

[4] Extracts from Memoranda of Minutes of Council

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Northern Department, 1872.

[5] Edmonton List of Servants, Outfit 1874. Also Edmonton District Servants' Balances, 1876.

[6] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1877.

[7] Ibid., 1881-1882. Also Edmonton District Servants' Balances, 1882.

[8] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1883.

[9] Edmonton District Servants' Balances, May 31, 1882. Also Edmonton List of Clerks, Outfit 1882.

[10] Edmonton post journal, May 16, 1861. Also Horetzky, *Canada on the Pacific*, p. 13. Also Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1876-1884. Also Edmonton District List of Servants, Outfit 1880.

Cardinal, Jacques

Jacques Cardinal, who served at Fort Assiniboine in the capacity of horsekeeper in Outfit 1826,[1] was a well-known mixed-blood freeman of the area frequented by these people between Lac La Biche and Jasper House. Cardinal was the man who cleared the trail from Edmonton to Fort Assiniboine, according to the arrangement made with Simpson in the fall of 1824.[2] It seems that he hired out to the Hudson's Bay Company on more than one occasion, serving on transport duty. He brought Columbia dispatches to Fort Assiniboine during the winter of 1828-29.[3] Seven months earlier he had met Edward Ermatinger and the spring express, coming eastward, 14 miles east of the summit of the Athabasca Pass at the Grand batture with 14 horses. This was on May 5, 1828.[4]

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[1] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1826-27.

[2] Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, pp. 20-22.

[3] Fort Assiniboine post journal, December 25, 1828.

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[4] Ermatinger and White, ed. "York Factory Express Journal", p. 119.

Cunningham, John

John Cunningham served at Fort Assiniboine during the winter of 1836-37.[1] He also served in the Saskatchewan District, as a middleman, during Outfit 1843, and as an interpreter, during Outfit 1855.[2] He served at Edmonton during Outfit 1858, when he was made a postmaster. He served at Edmonton again, from the fall of 1859 through the summer of 1863. He was made a clerk in Outfit 1859. Cunningham also served at Edmonton during the winters of Outfits 1863-1866. He retired in 1868.[3]

[1] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1836-37.

[2] Saskatchewan District Statements, Outfits 1843 and 1855.

[3] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1858-1868.

Delorme, Pierre Lemai, Lemais, or Lemoin, Sr.

Pierre Delorme, along with Jean-Baptiste Parisien, was the longest-serving employee at Fort Assiniboine of whom we have some knowledge. Delorme was listed as having been on staff at the post in Outfits 1824-1826, 1828, 1830, 1833 and 1836, but probably served there during the years in between as well. He was listed in Outfit 1832 under "Servants of Other Places." He previously had served in the North West Company.[1] Delorme was not a young man during his time of service: he is sometimes referred to in the Fort Assiniboine journals as "old Delorme."[2] He had a son, who worked at Fort Assiniboine and who served in the Saskatchewan District during Outfit 1840.[3] He was employed at Edmonton in Outfit 1858.[4] The only character reference we have of the father is George Linton's comment that he was "a lying and lazy old scoundrel--his best character."[5] Delorme might have been a mixed-blood and his boy possibly was, the mother possibly having been a native. Delorme, like Parisien and the rest of the post lower-rank employees with French names, was probably an old French-Canadian voyageur or a mixed-blood descendant of such a person who had become a freeman, and worked for the Company.

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[1] W.P. Baergen, The Fur Trade of Lesser Slave Lake, pp. 116, 122. Also Fort Assiniboine post journals, 1828-29 and 1830-31. Also Fort Assiniboine account books, 1826-27, 1832-33, 1836-37. Also Fort Assiniboine Report on District 1824-25, Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 8/e/1. Also Edmonton post journals, 1825-26 and 1833-34.

[2] Fort Assiniboine post journal, December 21, 1830.

[3] Ibid., 1828-29 and 1830-31. Also Saskatchewan District Statement, Outfit 1840.

[4] Edmonton post journal, 1858-59.

[5] Fort Assiniboine post journal, March 26, 1829.

Deschambeault, George

George Deschambeault served at Fort Assiniboine during Outfits 1824 and 1825.[1] He seems to have not been at the fort during the summers of 1825 or 1826. Simpson, who found him in charge when he passed through in the spring of 1825, replaced him with Henry Fisher, Jr. for the summer.[2] He was not in charge in the summer of 1826; George Linton, another clerk, held this position.[3] Deschambeault was probably occupied in taking out the Saskatchewan District's returns during these summers. He was born in Quebec in 1806 and entered the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company as an apprentice clerk in 1819. He served at Oxford House (1819-20) and Ile-a-la-Crosse (1820-22) before he began his service in the Saskatchewan District in 1822. After his time at Fort Assiniboine Deschambeault served at and was in charge of various posts in the districts of English River, Athabasca, and Mackenzie River (1826-1847). He was made a Chief Trader in 1847. He was in charge of Cumberland House (1847-1849) and Ile-a-la-Crosse (1849-50) until he went on furlough for a year. He then served in the Athabasca, English River, and Cumberland House Districts until 1868, when he again went on a year's furlough. He was then appointed to the Red River District, and died in Saint Boniface on December 27, 1870.[4]

[1] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 109. Also Edmonton post journal, 1825-26. Also Merk, Fur Trade and Empire, p. 27.

[2] Merk, Fur Trade and Empire, p. 149.

[3] Edmonton post journal, 1825-26.

[4] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 436.

Fisher, Henry Jr.

Henry Fisher, Jr. served at Fort Assiniboine during the winter of 1825-26. His name is pencilled in with the other appointments to the post made by the Council of the

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Northern Department in July 1825.[1] He had been in charge during the summer of 1825, replacing George Deschambeault, another clerk, who had been considered unfit for command by Simpson the previous spring.[2] Fisher was born about 1800 in Prairie du Chien and became an employee in the North West Company in 1816, stationed in the Saskatchewan district. He was attached to the Bow River Expedition in 1822-23 and in 1824 went south to the Piegans and convinced them to bring furs to Edmonton. They accompanied him there in the spring of 1825. After his time at Fort Assiniboine, Fisher was in charge of Edmonton (summer 1826) and spent Outfits 1826-1832 in charge of Rocky Mountain House. Simpson evaluated him in 1832 as a good trader who spoke Cree, but was lacking in education. He served at Bow Fort during Outfit 1832 and was in charge of Fort Pitt from 1833-1843. He retired in 1843 but rejoined the Company's service in 1844. Until his last retirement in 1855 he served at Fort Ellice and in the Red River and English River Districts. He became a Chief Trader in 1851. Details of his post-retirement life are unclear.[3]

[1] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 109.

[2] Edmonton post journal, 1825-26. Also Merk, Fur Trade and Empire, p. 149.

[3] Fleming, Minutes of Council Northern Department, pp. 440-441.

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Fraser, Colin

Colin Fraser was in charge of Fort Assiniboine first during the summer of 1834, when he was an interpreter serving in the Saskatchewan District.[1] He subsequently served at the post, with the rank of postmaster, in the capacity of manager for the winters of Outfits 1850 and 1851 and for the summer of 1852.[2] He served at Edmonton for the winter of 1852-53, teaching Cree to Father Albert Lacombe, and then returned to the charge of Fort Assiniboine for the summer of 1853, as far as can be discovered. Fraser was one of the more unique and colourful members of the lower ranks of the Company's rolls. He was brought to Rupert's Land in 1827 in the capacity of Governor Simpson's piper. He provided music for Simpson on his journey to the Columbia and back from York Factory in 1828-29. Fraser served at York Factory and Churchill during the next two years respectively, but from his appointment as an interpreter in the Saskatchewan District in 1831 to his death at Lac St. Anne in 1867, he remained in the Saskatchewan District. He was made a postmaster in Outfit 1835 and put in charge of Jasper House. He remained there until his appointment to Fort Assiniboine in 1850. Fraser applied for the charge of Lesser Slave Lake and received it, and he was in charge there through Outfits 1853-1860 and the summer of 1861. He became a clerk in 1859. In 1861, Fraser was put in charge of Lac Ste. Anne. He had a large family,[4] most likely of mixed blood.

[1] Edmonton post journal, 1833-34. Also E.E. Rich, ed. Simpson's 1828 Journey to the Columbia (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1947), p. 248.

[2] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1850-1851.

[3] Ibid., 1852. Also Memoirs of Father Lacombe, pp. 106-107 (translated copy).

[4] E.E. Rich, ed. Simpson's 1828 Journey to the Columbia, pp. 248-249. Also Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1853-1867. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 239/K/3. Also Edmonton post journal, 1861-62. Hudson's Bay Archives, B. 60/a/32.

Gerard or Gimard, Pierre

This man served at Fort Assiniboine during the winter of Outfit 1833.[1] He had been listed at the post during the previous outfit under "Servants of Other Places."[2]

[1] Edmonton post journal, 1833-34.

[2] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1832-33.

Grant, Richard

Richard Grant was in charge of Fort Assiniboine during the winters of 1830-31, 1831-32, and 1832-33,[1] and during the winter of 1829-30 served partly at Fort Assiniboine and partly at Edmonton. Grant was born about 1794 in the parish of Notre Dame, Montreal. He became an apprentice clerk in the North West Company's service in 1816, and spent the winters of 1820-21 and 1821-22 at Rocky Mountain House in the Fort des Prairies department, the second as an Hudson's Bay Company clerk. He spent Outfit 1822 at Edmonton and then went to York Factory in 1823. He was put in charge of Oxford House in 1827, and then was returned to Edmonton in 1828-29. After his time at Fort

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Assiniboine he spent Outfits 1833-1835 at Edmonton. In 1836 he became a Chief Trader and was given a year's furlough. In 1835 his wife, MaryAnn Berland, who had given him at least two sons, had died.[2] Possibly she was a relation of the Baptiste Berland mentioned in the Fort Assiniboine post journal of 1828-29.[3] From 1837 to 1841 he was in charge of the Island Lake District. In 1841 he was transferred to the Columbia District, where he served, mostly in the Snake country, until his retirement in 1853. He was married again to Helen, the widow of William Kittson. Grant died in Hellgate, Idaho, in 1862.[4]

[1] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1830-31, and account book 1832-33. Also E.H. Oliver, The Canadian North-West, Vol. I, pp. 645, 661.

[2] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 442.

[3] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1828-29.

[4] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 442.

Harriott, John Edward

John E. Harriott was in charge of Fort Assiniboine for the winters of 1826-27 and 1827-28.[1] Harriott was from London, and a nephew of J.P. Pruden, another figure of the Hudson's Bay Company. He was born in 1797 and became an apprentice in the Hudson's Bay Company's service in 1809. He remained at York Factory during the winter of 1809-10. He was stationed in the Saskatchewan District from 1811-12 to 1821-22, and became a clerk in 1816. Harriott was on the Bow River Expedition of 1822, and then was stationed

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at Carlton House from May 1823 to the spring of 1826. After his time at Fort Assiniboine he left for the Columbia District in the fall of 1828. He was promoted to the rank of Chief Trader in 1829. Harriott returned to the Saskatchewan District as manager of Piegan Post on the Bow River in 1832. He abandoned this post in January 1834 and re-established Rocky Mountain House, remaining in charge there until the end of the season 1840-41. He was in dharge of the Saskatchewan District at Edmonton House in 1840-41 and again in 1847-48. Outfits 1841-1846 he spent in charge of Rocky Mountain House. He then had a leave of absence for one year. He became a Chief Factor in 1846. Harriott spent the year 1848-49 in charge of the Pembina District at Pembina, and returned to the charge of Rocky Mountain House from 1849-50 until he took a year's leave in 1854-55. He retired on June 1, 1855 and died at the Red River Settlement on February 7, 1866. He was married three times, his daughter Margaret by his first marriage becoming the wife of John Rowand, Jr., who also had charge of Fort Assiniboine for some years. His second wife was John Rowand, Sr.'s daughter Ann and his third was Frances Bunn of Red River Settlement.[2] He had in all two sons and three daughters.[3]

[1] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1826-27. Edmonton post journals, 1826-27 and 1827-28. Also Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, pp. 144, 180.

[2] E.E. Rich, ed. Colin Robertson's Letters, 1817-1822 (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1939), pp. 216-217.

[3] Last will and testament of John E. Harriott, June 25, 1858.

Klyne, Michel

Michel Klyne had the charge of Fort Assiniboine during the summer of 1827. His rank was postmaster.[1] Klyne was a Dutch Canadian who was born approximately 1783. He became a servant in the North West Company about 1798. He was retained by the Hudson's Bay Company after the coalition and in 1822-23 was serving in the Lesser Slave Lake District as an interpreter. He was in charge of Jasper House in Outfits 1824 and 1827, and 1829-1835. He served in a number of capacities: canoe builder, gentlemen's servant, labourer, fisherman, interpreter, and postmaster. He retired with his sizeable family in 1835 to the Red River Settlement.[2]

[1] Edmonton post journal, 1827-28.

[2] Ibid. Also Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, pp. 443-444.

LaFrance, François

François LaFrance was a servant at Fort Assiniboine during the winter of 1826-27.[1] It is possible that he was the "F. LaFrance" who was one of the crewmen of the express canoes under Edward Ermatinger in the autumn of 1827.[2]

[1] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1826-27.

[2] Ermatinger, "York Factory Express Journal", p. 105.

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Linton, George

George Linton was in charge of Fort Assiniboine in the summers of 1826 and 1828, and the winters of 1828-29 and 1829-30.[1] Linton was born in England in 1800. He became an apprentice clerk in the North West Company's service in 1819 and served in the Athabasca department. He remained in this district from 1821-1823 in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. Linton served as clerk at Fort Pelly (1824-25) and Edmonton (1826-1828). As mentioned above he was in charge at Fort Assiniboine in the summers of 1826 and 1828, and the winters of 1828-29 and 1829-30. He spent Outfit 1830 in charge of Lesser Slave Lake, and served in New Caledonia from 1831 to 1835. He and his family and some others were drowned in the rapids between Fort George and Alexandria on November 8, 1835.[2]

[1] Edmonton post journals, 1825-26 and 1827-28. Also Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1828-29. Also Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 236.

[2] E.E. Rich, ed. Simpson's Athabasca Journal (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1938), p. 447.

Loyer, Louis

Louis Loyer was a servant at Fort Assiniboine during the winter of 1836-37.[1] It is possible that he was the "Loyer" who was one of the crewmen of the express canoes under Edward Ermatinger in the fall of 1827.[2] He may also have been the "Loyer" who brought to Edmonton returns from Lesser Slave Lake in May 1833.[3] He served in the Saskatchewan District during Outfit 1843.[4]

[1] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1836-37.

[2] Edward Ermatinger, "York Factory Express Journal", p. 105.

[3] Edmonton post journal, May 25, 1833.

[4] Saskatchewan District Statement, Outfit 1843.

McAulay, John

John McAulay, a clerk, was in charge of Fort Assiniboine for the summer of 1862.[1] Before his time at the post, he served at Edmonton during the winters of 1857-58, 1859-60, 1860-61, and 1861-62. He was in charge of Jasper House during the winter of 1858-59 and the summers of 1859 and 1860. McAulay became a clerk in 1860 and, after his summer at Fort Assiniboine, continued to be employed at Edmonton or Jasper House. He was in charge of the latter from the fall of 1862 through the summer of 1864. From the fall of 1864 to the summer of 1867 he served at Edmonton during the winter and had charge of Jasper House during the summer. He served at Edmonton from the fall of 1870 through the summer of 1871.[2] By 1874 McAulay, still a clerk, was serving in the Athabasca District at Battle River post. He continued to be employed in this district until the summer of 1880 inclusive, and became a Junior Chief Trader in Outfit 1877. He was disposable in the Athabasca District during the winter of Outfit 1875, and then was stationed at Fort St. John for the following two winters. He was stationed at Red River post in Outfit 1878, but his particular place of employment in the Athabasca District for

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Outfit 1879 was not stated in the minutes of the Council of the Northern Department. McAulay's whereabouts for the next few years are unknown and he is not mentioned in the above minutes; it is possible that he left the Company's service. In Outfit 1884, still a Junior Chief Trader, he was appointed to the Cumberland District.[3]

[1] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1862.

[2] Ibid., 1857-1870. Also Edmonton post journal, 1857-70.

[3] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1872 - 1884.

McIntosh, William

Chief Factor William McIntosh was in charge of Fort Assiniboine during the winter of 1824-25.[1] McIntosh was born in 1784 at Grand Rapids and was at Lesser Slave Lake in the service of the North West Company in 1803. He was embroiled in the struggles between the two companies in the Athabasca and Peace River districts, specifically in the successful defence of Fort Vermilion in 1815 against Hudson's Bay Company men under John Clarke. He became a Chief Trader with the coalition in 1821 and a Chief Factor in 1823. He served at Dunvegan from 1821 prior to his winter at Fort Assiniboine. After this winter of 1824-25, he was in charge of Nelson House (1825-1829), Cumberland House (1829-1832) and Dunvegan (1832-1834). He was afflicted with ill health and went on furlough until his retirement in 1837. He died on February 16, 1847.[2]

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[1] Merk, Fur Trade and Empire, p. 27.

[2] Rich, ed. Simpson's Athabasca Journal, p. 452.

McMillan, James

Chief Trader James McMillan was in charge of Fort Assiniboine during the winter of 1825-26.[1] McMillan was born in Scotland about 1783 and entered the service of the North West Company; in 1804 he was serving as a clerk in the Fort des Prairies department. McMillan served in the region west of the mountains. He worked with David Thompson during the period 1808-1812 in the Columbia and was appointed a Chief Trader in the Columbia District at the coalition. He was on leave in 1823-24 and accompanied Sir George Simpson on his journey from York Factory to the Columbia and back in 1824-25, the journey which saw the arrangements made for the trail to be cut to Edmonton from Fort Assiniboine. While in charge of Fort Assiniboine McMillan, in the autumn of 1825, surveyed the route from Jasper House to the head of the Fraser River. This route became the one by which leather was transported to New Caledonia (the Leather or Yellowhead Pass). McMillan was transferred to the Columbia District in 1826 and led the express party, and New Caledonia party, through Fort Assiniboine that fall. He was made a Chief Factor in 1827 and served in the Columbia District until the spring of 1829, when he accompanied Simpson on his return to the east. He went on furlough to Scotland in 1829-30 and was married. From 1830 to 1834 he managed, not too successfully, an experimental farm at Red River Settlement. During Outfits 1834-1836 he served in the Montreal Department. He then went on furlough, and retired on June 1, 1839. He died in 1858. McMillan had two daughters. He also had a son, William,[2] mentioned in the Fort Assiniboine journal as having brought horses from Edmonton to the post for the use of the brigades and express, in the spring of 1831.[3] He adopted two girls and a boy, presumably natives;[4] perhaps they were the children noted above.

[1] Fleming, ed. Minutes of Council Northern Department, p. 109. Also Edmonton post journal, 1825-26.

[2] Fleming, Minutes of Council Northern Department, pp. 450-451.

[3] Fort Assiniboine post journal, 1830-31.

[4] Last will and testament of James McMillan, October 28, 1813.

Parisien, Jean-Baptiste

Along with Pierre Delorme, Parisien is the longest-serving Fort Assiniboine employee about whom we have much information. He began his service there in 1823 with the construction of the post.[1] He served as well in 1824-25.[2] Thereafter his name is listed among those of the employees at Fort Assiniboine during Outfits 1825-1833.[3] Although the writing in the account book for that year is very difficult to read, Parisien is listed in 1832-33 as having attained the rank of assistant interpreter.[4] Parisien had

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a large family, and departed with it in the spring of 1834 for Red River Settlement.[5] His son, Baptiste, however, did not leave. He remained in service and was employed at Fort Assiniboine in 1836-37.[6] This son had served at the post in Outfits 1828, 1830, and 1832.[7] He served in the Saskatchewan District during Outfits 1840 and 1843 as well.[8]

[1] See Chapter 1, p. 16.

[2] Fort Assiniboine Report on District, 1824-25. Also Edmonton post journal, 1825-26.

[3] Edmonton post journals, 1825-26, 1827-28, 1833-34. Also Fort Assiniboine post journals, 1828-29, 1830-31 and account books 1826-27, and 1832-33.

[4] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1832-33.

[5] Edmonton post journal, 1833-34.

[6] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1836-37.

[7] Fort Assiniboine account book, 1832-33 and post journals 1828-29 and 1830-31.

[8] Saskatchewan District Statements, Outfits 1840, 1843.

Renney, Antoine

Antoine Renney was in charge of Fort Assiniboine during the winter of 1874-75.[1] He died while enroute to Fort Edmonton with his winter returns.[2] Renney had been in the Company's service for one year and was described as a steady old trader, who could live like an Indian.[3]

[1] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1874.

[2] Edmonton Report, 1875.

[3] Edmonton List of Servants, 1875.

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Rennier, Antoine

Antoine Rennier was in charge of Fort Assiniboine for the winters of Outfits 1854-1856 and 1858, and the summers of 1859 and 1860.[1] He held the rank of interpreter. Rennier was also known as Kimenawis.[2] Previous to his service at Fort Assiniboine, Rennier had been employed in the Saskatchewan District during Outfits 1843, 1851 and 1855. He was a middleman in 1843 and by 1855 had become an interpreter.[3]

[1] Minutes of Council Northern Department and Edmonton post journal, 1854-1860.

[2] Edmonton post journal, 1856-57.

[3] Saskatchewan District Statements, Outfits 1843, 1851, 1855.

Rowand, John Jr.

John Rowand, Jr. was in charge of Fort Assiniboine during the winters of Outfits 1836-1837 and 1839-1841.[1] No records are available for Outfit 1838 but he was possibly in charge at the post during that year as well. Rowand was the mixed-blood son of Chief Factor John Rowand Sr., head of the Saskatchewan District from 1823 to 1854 save for periods of furlough or absence.[2] John Rowand Jr. started as a postmaster at Rocky Mountain House in the winter of 1834-35. He was at Edmonton in the summer of 1835.[3] He then was in the Company's service at Red River Settlement in 1835-36.[4] The summers of 1838, and 1840-42 Rowand spent at Edmonton (1838) Cumberland (1840) and Edmonton (1841-42).[5] He was in charge of Cumberland House from the fall of 1842 through the summer of 1843. Rowand spent the winter of 1843-44 in charge of Fort Pitt and the following summer in charge at Edmonton.[7] This pattern was repeated from the fall of 1844 through the summer of 1855.[8] He became a clerk in 1837[9] and a Chief Trader in 1850.[10] Rowand moved to the Red River Settlement with his wife and family, where he died on March 23, 1865.[11]

---

[1] E.H. Oliver, The Canadian North-West, Vol. II, pp. 729, 761, 778, 802, 819.

[2] Rich, ed. Colin Robertson's Letters, pp. 240-241.

[3] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1834.

[4] E.H. Oliver, The Canadian North-West, Vol. II, p. 715.

[5] Ibid., 762, 779, 803, 820.

[6] Ibid., 839-840.

[7] Ibid., 855-856.

[8] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1844-1854.

[9] E.H. Oliver, The Canadian North-West, Vol. II, p. 762.

[10] Minutes of Council Northern Department, 1850.

[11] Last will and testament of John Rowand Jr., 1865.

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Appendix 6

Survey Dates and Locations of Fort Assiniboine and Adjacent or Tributary Townships.[1]

Land Description				
Township	Range	Meridian	Settlement Name	Survey Date
61	5	5	Holmes Crossing	August 31, 1907
62	5	5		September 8 - March 6, 1908-09
63	5	5	Klondike City	September 6 - October 17, 1912
61	6	5		September 10 - November 17, 1908
62	6	5	Fort Assiniboine Freeman River	December 5 - February 9, 1908-09
63	6	5		September 3 - October 12, 1912
61	7	5		October 10 - November 12, 1908
62	7	5	Topland	December 14, 1908 - February 4, 1909
63	7	5		August 28 - November 16, 1915

[1] Surveyors' Field Notebooks 10888, 15329, 10890, 10887, 14332, 10886, 14333, 12935, 11454, 10889, 15327, 9918.

In the following appendix (Appendix 7), there are two columns for each township for each year. The column on the left refers to standard free homestead entries only; the column on the right refers to all other types of land entries in the district, namely purchases, transfers and scrip.

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Appendix 7

	First Entries												Subsequent Entries												
Location	1909		1910		1911		1912		1913		1914		1909		1910		1911		1912		1913		1914		Total
61 5 5	-	2	1	1	4	-	4	2	3	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	25
62 5 5	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	-	2	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	16
63 5 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
61 6 5	3	1	2	-	4	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	19
62 6 5	7	5	9	-	29	4	22	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	8	-	9	-	2	-	98
63 6 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	18
61 7 5	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
62 7 5	-	2	6	-	9	7	16	1	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	9	-	-	-	1	-	58
63 7 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	10	10	18	1	48	11	49	3	24	1	21	-	1	-	1	1	7	2	23	-	10	-	6	-	

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Appendix 8

Birthplaces of Applicants for Entry[1]

British Isles

England	12
Ireland	1
Scotland	10

Scandinavia

Sweden	5
Norway	6
Denmark	1
Finland	1
Iceland	1

Belgium	2
Germany	2
Bohemia (Austria)	2
Russia	1
Canada	19
Australia	1
United States	86
Holland	1

---

[1] See note 125.

Appendix 9

Previous Occupations of Applicants for Entry [1]

Farmers	88	Cooks	1
Labourers	6	Hotel Owners	1
Teamsters	3	Miners	1
Clerks	3	Railroad	2
Nurses	1	Trappers	1
Physicians	1	Real Estate Agents	3
Bakers	1	Hardware Merchants	1
Masons	1	Travelling Salesmen	1
Carpenters	12	Financial Broker	1
Ranchers	4	Machinists	3

---

[1] See Note 125.

Appendix 10

Population Figures for the Fort Assiniboine District, 1911[1]

Land Location			Men				Women			
Township	Range	Meridian	Single	Married	Widowed	Not Given	Single	Married	Widowed	Not Given
61	5	5	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
62	6	5	16	4	1	1	4	4	3	-
62	7	5	5	2	-	-	-	1	-	-

			Total Population	Dwellings	Families
61	5	5	4	4	4
62	6	5	33	19	19
62	7	5	8	6	6

---

[1] Census of Canada 1911. Vol. 1: Areas and Population (Ottawa, 1912), pp. 180-183.

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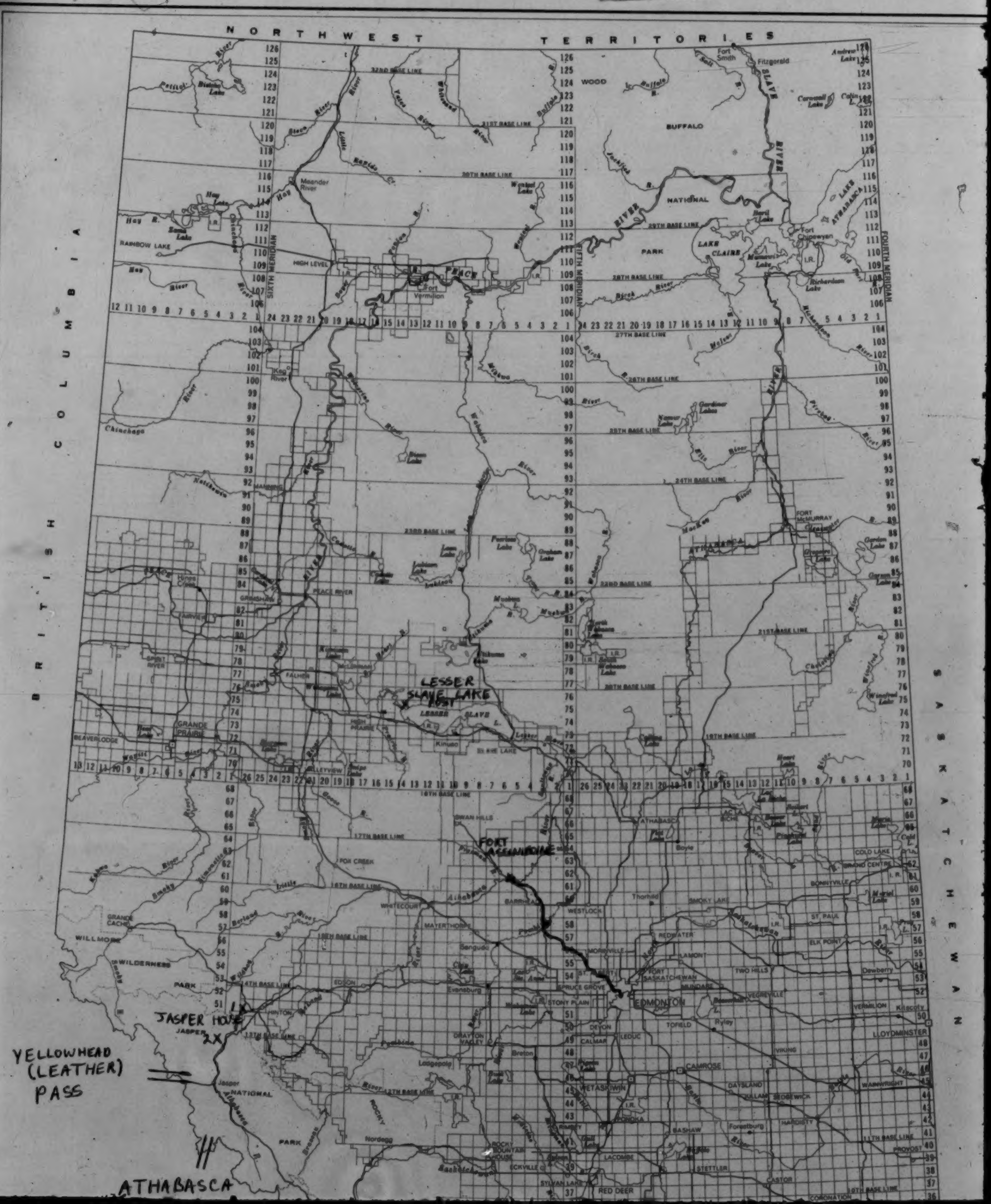
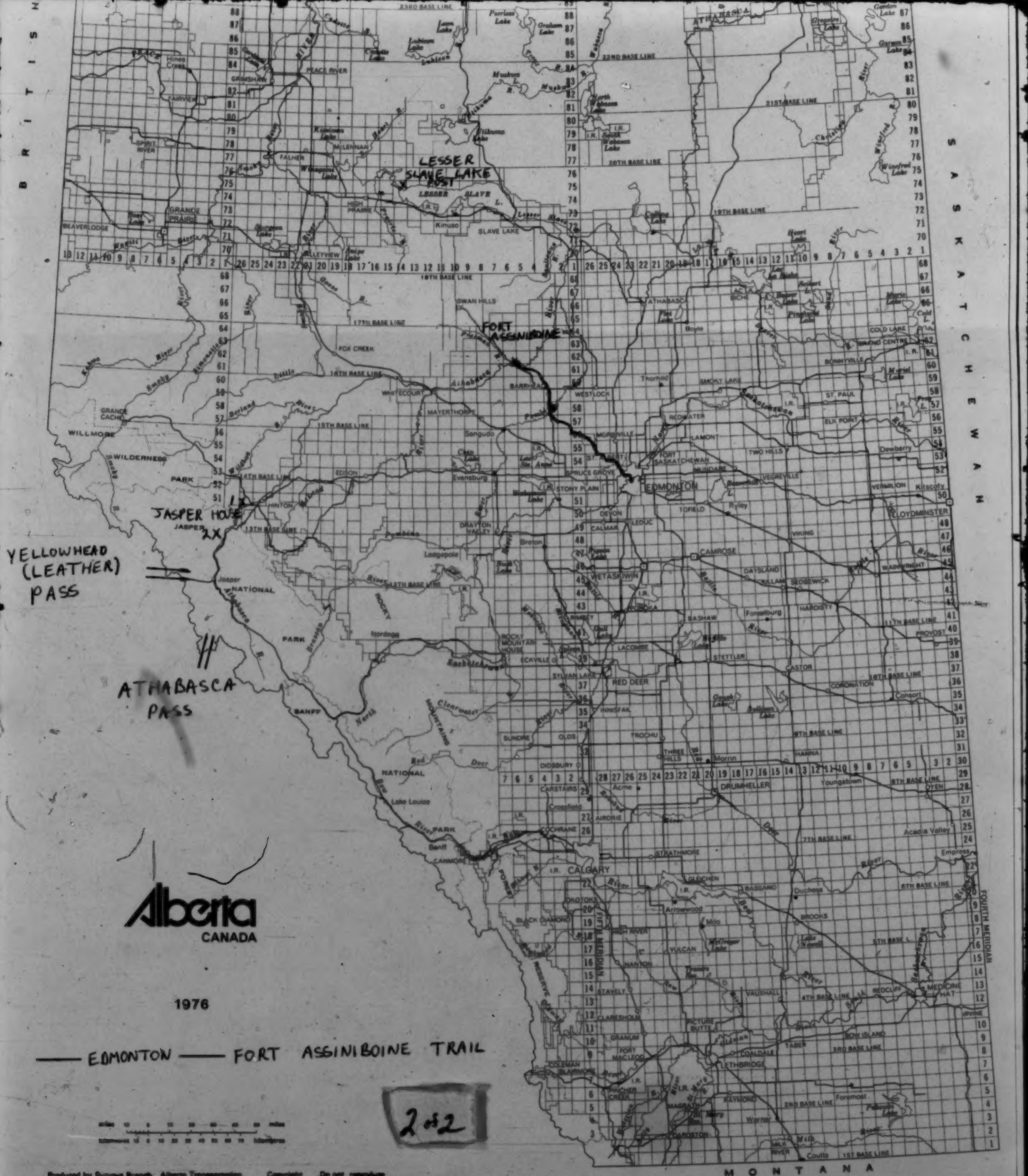
MAP 1 1 of


NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
BRITISH COLUMBIA
SASKATCHEWAN
SIXTH MERIDIAN
FIFTH MERIDIAN
FOURTH MERIDIAN
WOOD BUFFALO NATIONAL PARK
Fort Smith
Fitzgerald
SLAVE RIVER
LAKE ATHABASCA
Fort Chipewyan
LAKE CLAIRE
HIGH LEVEL
RAINBOW LAKE
Fort Vermilion
PEACE RIVER
FORT McMURRAY
ATHABASCA
GRIMSHAW
FAIRVIEW
SPIRIT RIVER
FALHER
GRANDE PRAIRIE
BEAVERLODGE
VALLEYVIEW
HIGH PRAIRIE
LESSER SLAVE LAKE POST
LESSER SLAVE L.
SLAVE LAKE
SWAN HILLS
FORT ASSINIBOINE
FOX CREEK
WHITECOURT
BARRHEAD
WESTLOCK
MAYERTHORPE
GRANDE CACHE
WILLMORE WILDERNESS PARK
EDSON
HINTON
JASPER HOUSE 1X
JASPER
2X
JASPER NATIONAL PARK
YELLOWHEAD (LEATHER) PASS
ATHABASCA
EDMONTON
ST. ALBERT
SPRUCE GROVE
STONY PLAIN
FORT SASKATCHEWAN
REDWATER
SMOKY LAKE
ST. PAUL
COLD LAKE
BONNYVILLE
ELK POINT
VEGREVILLE
VERMILION
LLOYDMINSTER
CAMROSE
WETASKIWIN
LEDUC
DEVON
DRAYTON VALLEY
ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE
RED DEER
LACOMBE
STETTLER
WAINWRIGHT
PROVOST


LESSER SLAVE LAKE POST
FORT ASSINIBOINE
JASPER HOUSE
YELLOWHEAD (LEATHER) PASS
ATHABASCA PASS
BRITISH
SASKATCHEWAN
MONTANA
FOURTH MERIDIAN
FIFTH MERIDIAN
PEACE RIVER
GRIMSHAW
FAIRVIEW
Hines Creek
SPIRIT RIVER
McLENNAN
FALHER
HIGH PRAIRIE
Kinuso
SLAVE LAKE
LESSER SLAVE L.
GRANDE PRAIRIE
BEAVERLODGE
VALLEYVIEW
SWAN HILLS
FOX CREEK
WHITECOURT
BARRHEAD
WESTLOCK
MAYERTHORPE
ATHABASCA
Boyle
LAC LA BICHE
COLD LAKE
GRAND CENTRE
BONNYVILLE
ST. PAUL
ELK POINT
SMOKY LAKE
Thorhild
REDWATER
LAMONT
FORT SASKATCHEWAN
MORINVILLE
ST. ALBERT
SPRUCE GROVE
STONY PLAIN
EDMONTON
TWO HILLS
MUNDARE
VEGREVILLE
VERMILION
Dewberry
Kitscoty
LLOYDMINSTER
Tofield
Ryley
DEVON
CALMAR
LEDUC
WETASKIWIN
CAMROSE
VIKING
WAINWRIGHT
DAYSLAND
KILLAM
SEDGEWICK
HARDISTY
Forestburg
BASHAW
PROVOST
STETTLER
CASTOR
CORONATION
Consort
LACOMBE
PONOKA
RIMBEY
Breton
DRAYTON VALLEY
Evansburg
EDSON
HINTON
JASPER
GRANDE CACHE
WILLMORE WILDERNESS PARK
Jasper NATIONAL PARK
Nordegg
ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE
ECKVILLE
SYLVAN LAKE
RED DEER
INNISFAIL
OLDS
SUNDRE
TROCHU
THREE HILLS
Morrin
HANNA
DIDSBURY
CARSTAIRS
Acme
DRUMHELLER
Youngstown
OYEN
Crossfield
AIRDRIE
COCHRANE
STRATHMORE
BANFF NATIONAL PARK
Lake Louise
Banff
CANMORE
CALGARY
GLEICHEN
BASSANO
Duchess
BROOKS
Acadia Valley
Empress
OKOTOKS
BLACK DIAMOND
HIGH RIVER
VULCAN
NANTON
Milo
STAVELY
CLARESHOLM
GRANUM
FORT MACLEOD
PICTURE BUTTE
VAUXHALL
TABER
BOW ISLAND
REDCLIFF
MEDICINE HAT
IRVINE
COALDALE
LETHBRIDGE
COLEMAN
BLAIRMORE
PINCHER CREEK
RAYMOND
MAGRATH
CARDSTON
Foremost
Warner
MILK RIVER
Coutts
Alberta
CANADA
1976
—— EDMONTON —— FORT ASSINIBOINE TRAIL
miles
kilometres

2 of 2

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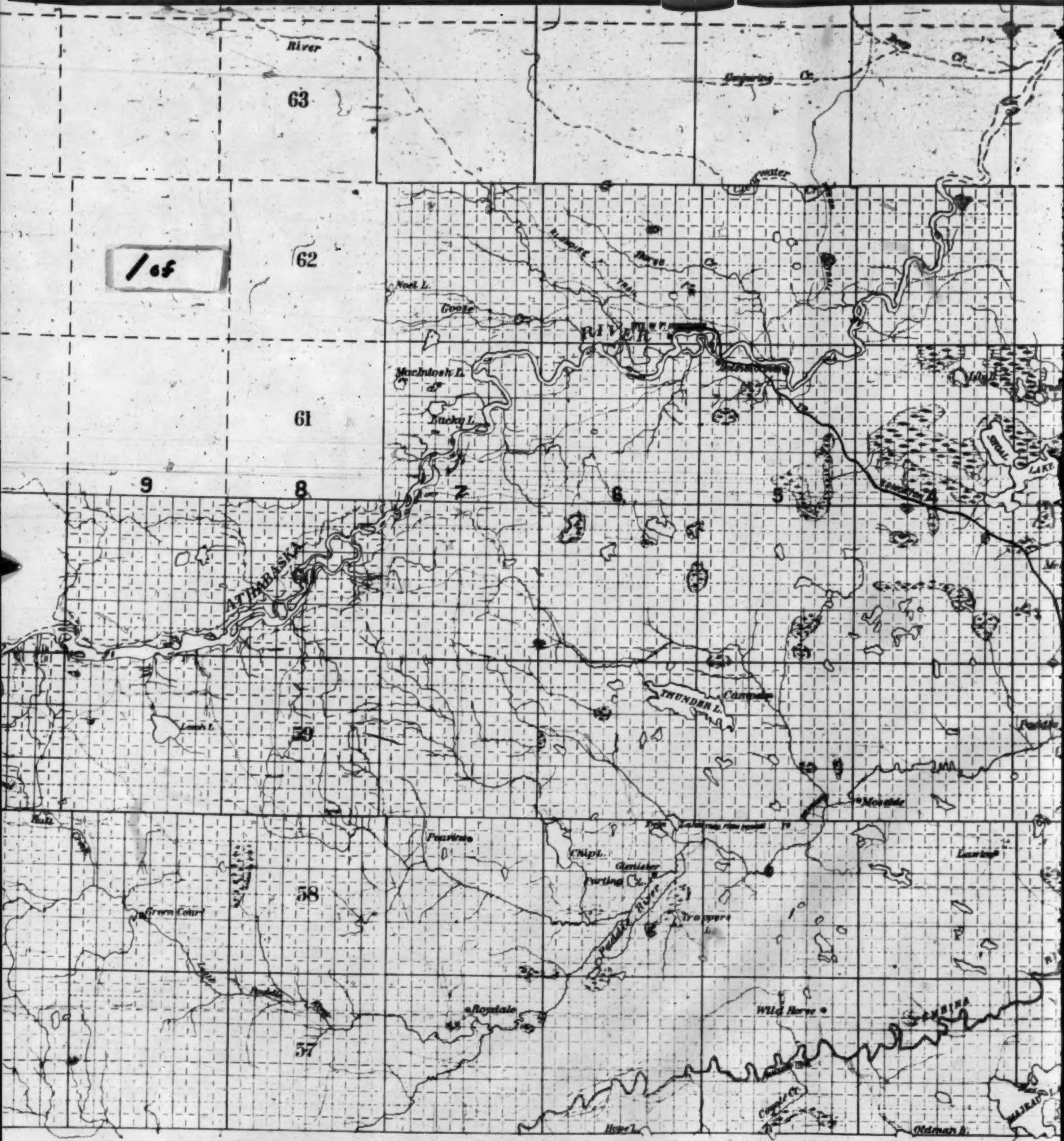
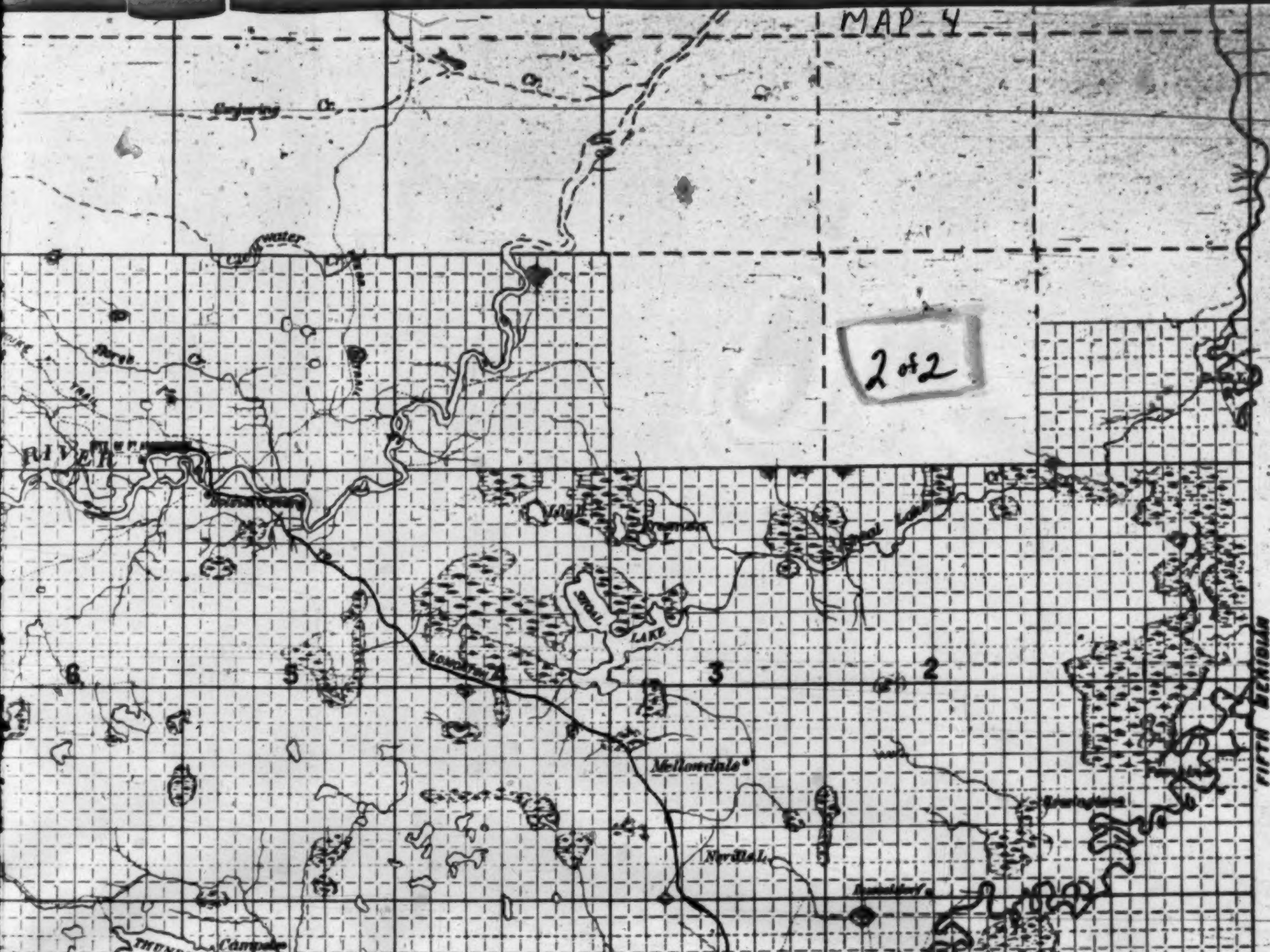

River
63
Conjuring Cr.
Clearwater
62
Noel L.
Goose Cr.
Horse Cr.
RIVER
Macintosh L.
61
Lucky L.
9
8
7
6
5
ATHABASKA
LAKE
THUNDER L.
Campsie
Loon L.
59
Moosehide
Prairie
Chip L.
Genister
Parting Cr.
Paddle River
Trappers L.
58
F
Green Court
Little Paddle River
Roydale
Wild Horse
PEMBINA
57
Conn's Cr.
Hope L.
Oldman L.

1 of

MAP 4

2 of 2



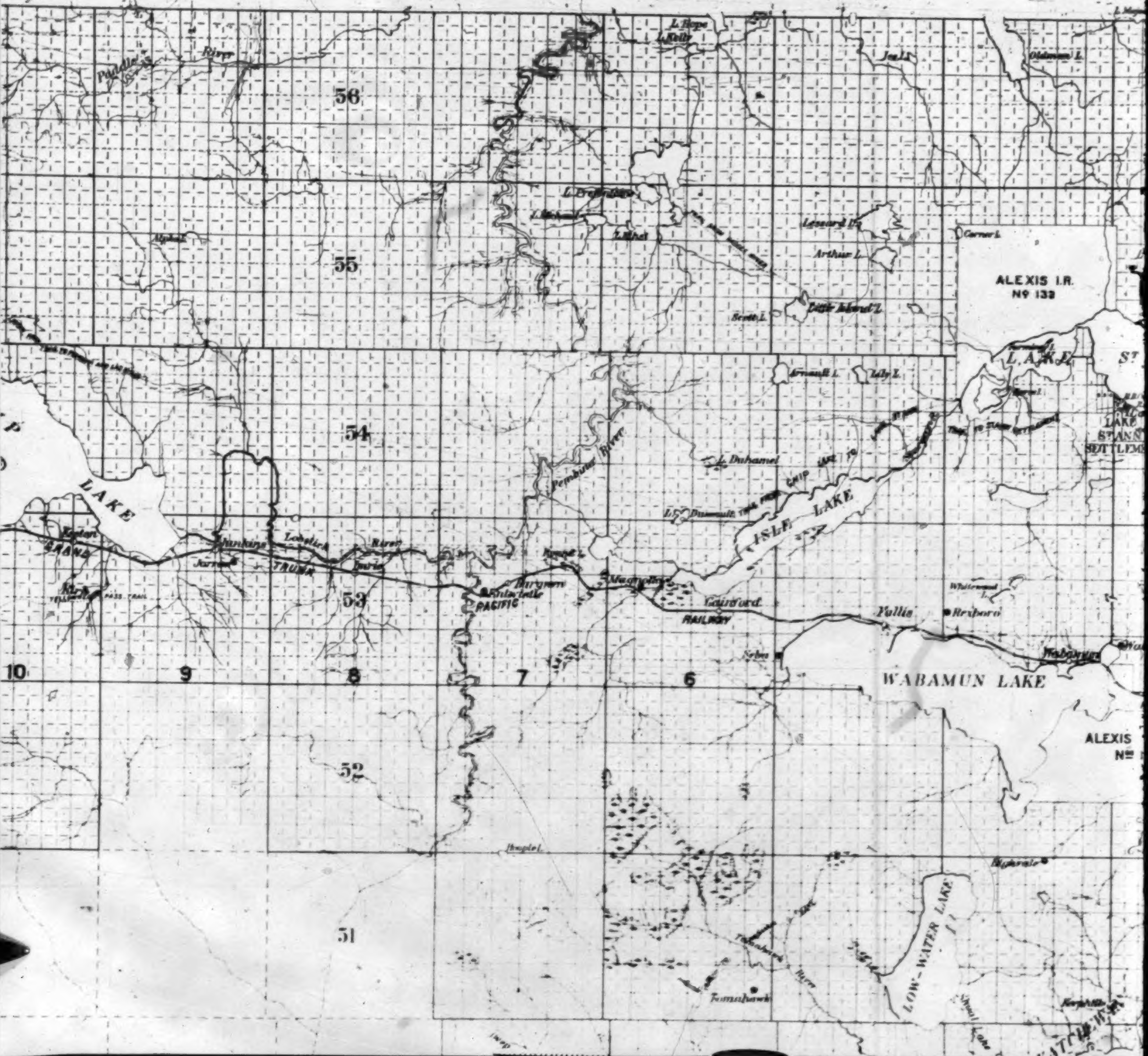
Cr.
Clearwater Cr.
Horse Cr.
Trail
RIVER
Shoal Lake
6
5
4
3
2
Mellowdale
Nevills L.
FIFTH MERIDIAN
Thunder L.
Campsie
Paddle River
Mosside
Eastburg
Chipt.
Banister
Parting Cr.
Paddle River
Trappers L.
Lawing
River
Barrhead
Wild Horse
Pembina
Lac La Nonne
George L.
Majeau Lake
Lac la Nonne
Glenevis
Hope L.
Camp Cr.
Oldman L.
Nakamun L.

PHOTO ZINCOGRAPHED AT THE SURVEYOR GENERAL'S OFFICE OTTAWA CANADA

1 of

ST ANN SHEET

WEST OF FIFTH MERIDIAN



56
55
54
53
52
51
10
9
8
7
6
Paddle River
L. Hope
L. Kelly
Joe L.
Oldman L.
Lessard L.
Arthur L.
Carrer L.
ALEXIS I.R.
Nº 133
Little Island L.
Scott L.
LAKE
ST
Arnault L.
Lily L.
LAKE
ST ANN
SETTLEMENT
L. Duhamel
Pembina River
ISLE LAKE
LAKE
Junkins
Lobstick
River
GRAND
TRUNK
PACIFIC
RAILWAY
Entwistle
Gainford
Fallis
Seba
WABAMUN LAKE
Wabamun
ALEXIS
Nº
Highvale
LOW-WATER LAKE
Tomahawk
Keephills

2 of 2

ET

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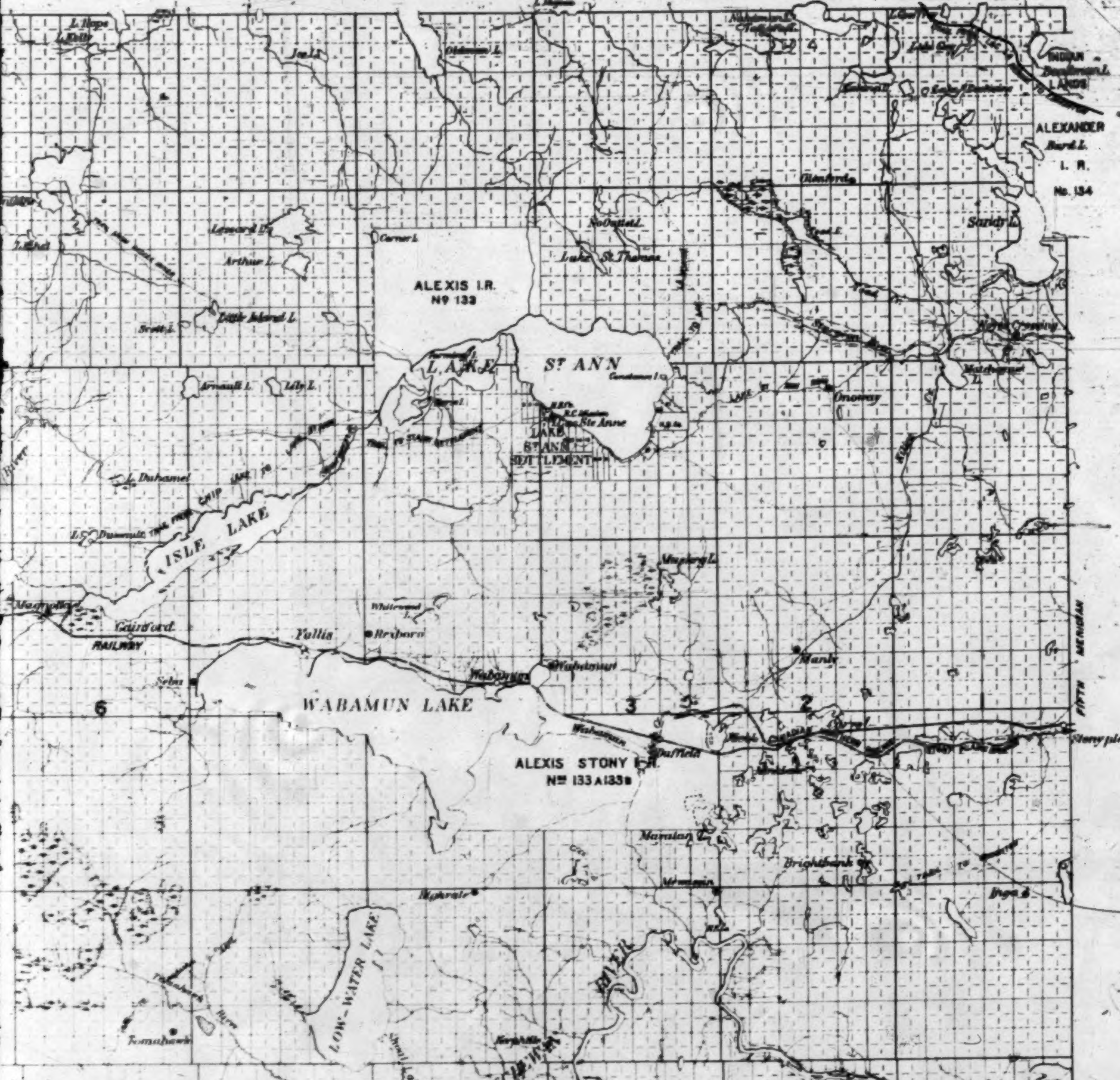
Revised to the 13th April 1910

MAP 3


L. Hope
L. Kelly
Jail L.
Oldman L.
L. Majeau
Nakamun L.
Lac Ste Anne
INDIAN
Deadman L.
LANDS
ALEXANDER
Bard L.
I. R.
No. 134
Sandy L.
Riviere Qui Barre
Leonard L.
Arthur L.
No Outlet L.
Lake St. Thomas
Carrier L.
ALEXIS I.R.
No 133
Little Island L.
Scott L.
LAKE
ST ANN
Constance L.
Ste Anne
LAKE
ST ANN
SETTLEMENT
Onoway
Arnault L.
Lily L.
L. Duhamel
CHIP LAKE
ISLE LAKE
L. Dussault
Mayfield L.
Whitewood L.
Gainford
RAILWAY
Yellis
Brisboro
Wabamun
Manly
Seba
6
WABAMUN LAKE
3
2
Duffield
ALEXIS STONY I.R.
No 133 A 133 B
Stony Plain
FIFTH MERIDIAN
Brightbank
Highvale
Inga
LOW-WATER LAKE
RIVER
SASKATCHEWAN
Tomahawk

C.N Ry not
of Ston
the

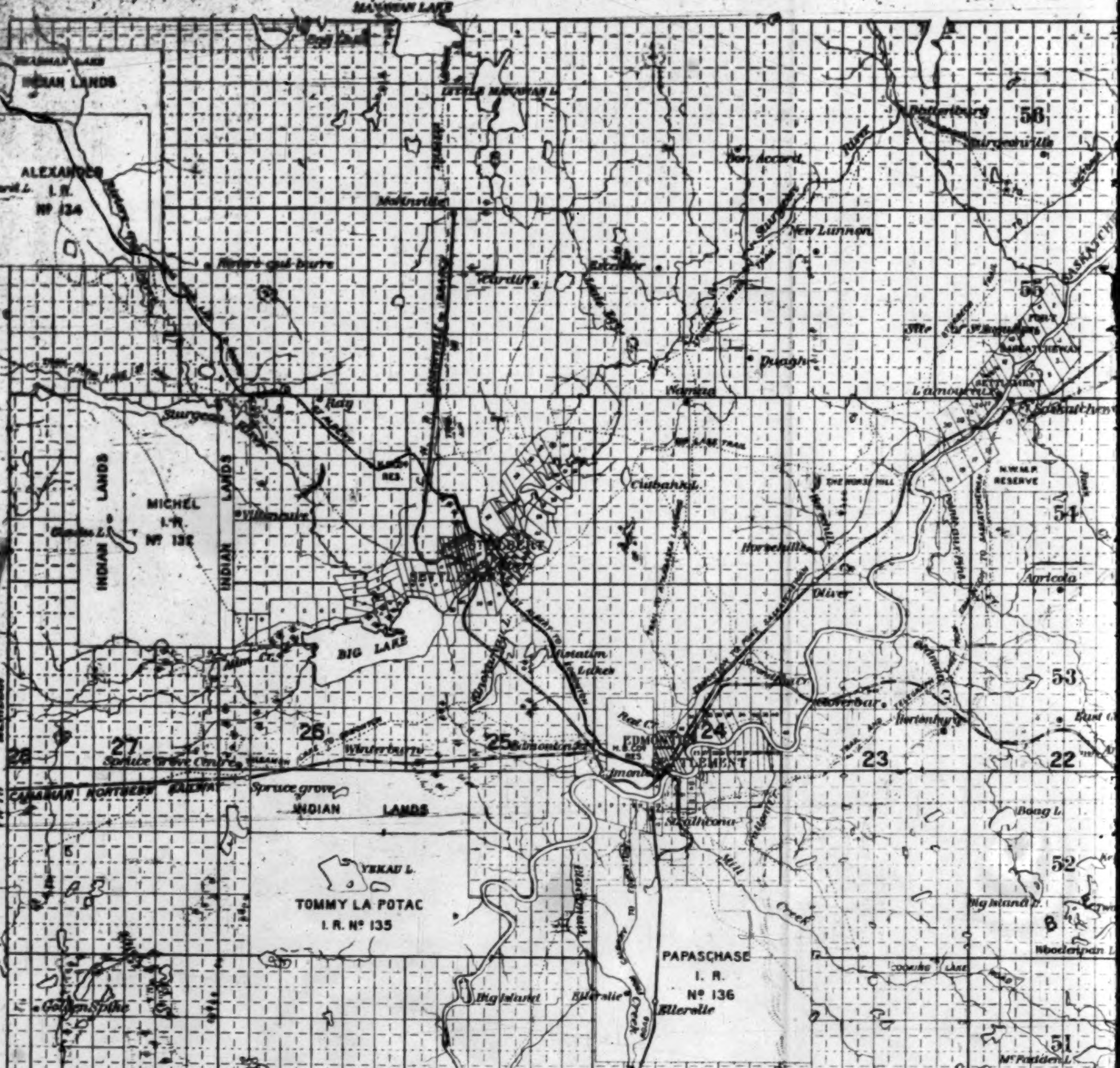
Sectional Map,
Three Miles to one Inch.

MAP 2

EDMO

WES

1 of



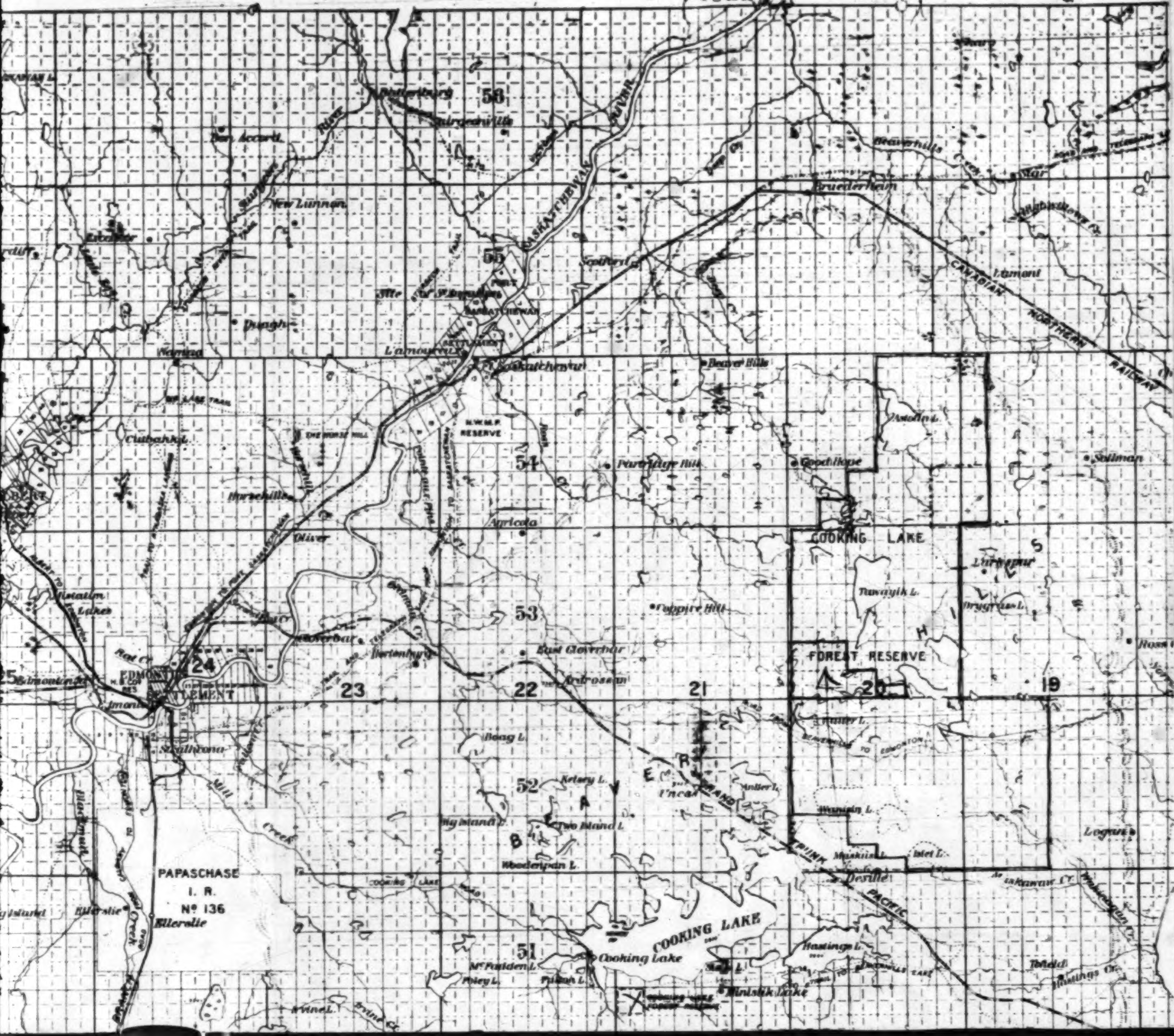
MANAWAN LAKE
INDIAN LANDS
LITTLE MANAWAN L.
ALEXANDER I.R. Nº 134
Morinville
Riviere qui barre
Cardiff
Estrabier
New Lunnon
Bon Accord
Battleford
Sturgeonville
56
55
Duagh
Namao
Lamoureux
Ray
Sturgeon River
MICHEL I.R. Nº 132
INDIAN LANDS
Villeneuve
Clubbank
Horsehills
Oliver
N.W.M.P. RESERVE
54
Agricola
BIG LAKE
Rotation Lakes
Beverly
Clover Bar
53
Fort Saskatchewan
28
27
26
25
24
23
22
FIFTH MERIDIAN
Spruce Grove Centre
Winterburn
Edmonton
EDMONTON SETTLEMENT
CANADIAN NORTHERN RAILWAY
Spruce grove
INDIAN LANDS
Strathcona
Mill Creek
Cooking Lake
Boag L.
52
YEKAU L.
TOMMY LA POTAC I.R. Nº 135
PAPASCHASE I.R. Nº 136
Blackmud
Big Island
Ellerslie
Big Island L.
Golden Spike
Whitemud Creek
51
McFadden L.
Foley L.
Irvine L.
RIVER

MAP. 2

EDMONTON SHEET

2 of 2

WEST OF FOURTH MERIDIAN


Bon Accord
Sturgeon River
New Lunnan
Excelsior
Dunghe
Waring
58
55
Ste Anne
St Emerentienne
FORT SASKATCHEWAN SETTLEMENT
L'amoureux
Ft Saskatchewan
SASKATCHEWAN RIVER
N.W.M.P. RESERVE
Scotford
Bruderheim
Beaverhills Creek
Star
Lamont
CANADIAN NORTHERN RAILWAY
Beaver Hills
Partridge Hill
Goodhope
Astotin L.
Sollman
54
Clubahk L.
Horsehills
Oliver
Agricola
53
Rat Cr.
Clover Bar
Bellerose
Belmont
East Clover Bar
Ardrossan
Coppice Hill
COOKING LAKE
Tawayik L.
Lindbrook
Brygrass L.
FOREST RESERVE
H I L L S
25
Edmonton
24
EDMONTON SETTLEMENT
Strathcona
23
22
21
20
19
Bong L.
Kelsey L.
52
Big Island L.
Two Island L.
Wooden pan L.
B A V E R
Uncas
Antler L.
GRAND TRUNK PACIFIC
Wanisan L.
Muskiia L.
Islet L.
Deville
Logan
Mill Creek
Blackmud Cr.
Ellerslie
PAPASCHASE
I. R.
Nº 136
Big Island
COOKING LAKE
51
McFadden L.
Foley L.
Cooking Lake
Hastings L.
Ministik Lake
Irvine L.
Irvine Cr.
Tofield
Hastings Cr.